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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE announcement that the final stages of the Sedition Bill have been deferred until the autumn is gratifying but not surprising. A Government with a majority can always find parliamentary time for the measures it is keen about and has always a good excuse for postponement when it is lukewarm. To do the Attorney-General justice, he has never been enthusiastic about the Sedition Bill and we may take it as a sign of grace that the Government has so far shown itself susceptible to public opinion that it has deferred it. If the pressure is maintained and the significance of this Bill really explained to the country during the summer the chances of the Bill being allowed to lapse altogether are good. The Betting Bill is also postponed, but so, unfortunately, is decision about the banning of political uniforms. The Olympia meeting has shown what Fascism promises to be even in this country (for sworn statements about Olympia see *Fascism at Olympia*, published by Gollancz). Though Sir Oswald's stock is now low and the White City meeting abandoned, we shall go on having rioting and violence in our politics until political uniforms are illegal.

The Eastern Locarno

The foreign affairs debate in the House of Commons last Friday did much to clear the air. We have so often had occasion to blame Sir John Simon, that we are very glad to be able this time to praise him. He explained clearly the Eastern Locarno project and the British Government's position in the matter—and the British Government's position seems to us, in all the circumstances, the right one. They approve the project on certain conditions: it must not be an alliance of one group of Powers against another (which means in effect that Germany must come into it); it must not involve us in new commitments. Furthermore, not only must Russia enter the League of Nations, but we shall "warmly welcome" her entry, said Sir John—and this was capped by the handsome bouquet which Mr. Churchill, of all people, tossed to Moscow! Italy also approves of the project, and the only objections come from Poland and Germany. The Poles we do not expect to be intransigent. The attitude of the Germans is not at the moment encouraging; they are angry at what they are pleased to call the surrender of Britain to France, and they continue to prate of "encirclement." But if they are "encircled," it will be their own fault, especially in view of the new approaches which Sir John Simon is to make, with the French consent, to satisfy the German claims to equality.

Murder and Suicide in Germany

The number killed in the June massacres, according to the best estimates available, seems to have been more than

200. Some were killed by way of settling old grudges. To give evidence against a Nazi in court is one form of suicide in Germany. Another is to be a Jew, and a number of non-Aryans in Silesia and elsewhere have paid the penalty for their folly in choosing the wrong grandparents. Others, as our Berlin correspondent points out, seem to have died because they knew too much about the regime. How many have been killed in concentration camps or prisons we do not know. The announcement that Erich Mühsam "committed suicide" in his cell is a sinister indication of what is still being done to men who have never been tried or even charged with any offence. Mühsam was not only a well-known man of letters: he was also an opponent of exceptional courage and therefore, in Nazi eyes, worthy of death. The testimony of men who were imprisoned with him at various times is evidence of his courage. He was constantly beaten, and, though broken in health, subjected to the severest forms of manual labour. On one occasion when repeated threats and beatings failed to make him sing the "Horst Wessel" song, he was compelled to dig his own grave. He is now dead and we can only guess at the circumstances of his death. Other writers, still in concentration camps, include men like Ossietsky, who has been strongly recommended for the Nobel prize, Ludwig Renn, author of *War*, Werner Hirsch, Klaus Neukranz, Theodor Neubauer, Mierendorff and W. Bendel. Meanwhile, the threatened trial of Thaelman and Torgler (who has never been released in spite of his acquittal) before a packed "people's court" has been postponed, apparently in deference to foreign opinion. In view of the intensity of this feeling in Great Britain and in other countries, will the Nazi Government, which professes to desire good relations with its neighbours, not even now release these innocent men?

The San Francisco Strike

The most spectacular of the many strikes to which the New Deal has given rise has broken out in San Francisco, and the sister city of Oakland. The longshoremen had been on strike for two or three months in the usual effort to compel the employers to honour the Recovery Act by recognising their union. They have grievances over hours and wages, but the main battle is over the recruitment of casual labour in the docks. It goes to-day, they say, by favouritism and bribery—the latter on a scale that seriously reduces wages; they want a system of rotation, supervised by their union. This the employers oppose, alleging that it means the "closed shop." On Monday, the other unions of these two cities, to the number of 150,000 men, came to the dockers' aid by declaring a general strike. Their strategy aims at starving the city out, and it operates chiefly by a blockade, in which railwaymen co-operate, that turns back all supplies as they near it. All but a tolerated handful of the restaurants are closed, and the shops are virtually without meat, fresh vegetables and petrol. The strikers, who are trying to avoid the violence traditional in San Francisco labour disputes, aim at ensuring supplies of food to the strikers, and of milk to children. The municipal tramways, at first stopped, were later permitted to run. The State and City Authorities have brought in many thousands of militiamen and police, who are convoying food supplies across the strikers' lines. Following General Johnson's arrival on a mission of mediation the Strike Committee advised the dockers to make it clear that they were willing to accept arbitration, and on Tuesday the Committee passed a resolution requesting the State and City Authorities affected by the strike to appeal to President Roosevelt to bring about a settlement by requesting employers and employees alike to submit all matters under dispute to arbitration and to accept its decision as final. The most dubious element in the situation now is the attitude of some of the employers' groups on the question of casual labour.

Dawes Loan Trustees Take Action

We in Great Britain have settled for the time being the problem of German debts. But it was not likely that an arrangement which gave preferential treatment to British creditors would appeal to the Americans or to other creditor groups. Accordingly, the trustees under the Dawes Loan, whose chairman is an American, have used the drastic powers conferred on them under the Dawes Scheme by impounding the German customs and other revenues which were earmarked as security for the payments on the Loan. Or rather, they have ordered the Reichsbank not to pay over the proceeds of these taxes to the German Government until the service of the Loan has been met. In doing this, the trustees are within their powers under the Dawes Plan; but it seems to be generally expected that the German Government will order the Reichsbank to disregard their instructions; for otherwise there will be no money available for meeting current public expenses. The trustees cannot, in fact, get hold of the revenues if the Reichsbank refuses to make payment. But they can put Germany into a very awkward attitude of definitely flouting her international obligations, and not merely deferring transfer, as she has done hitherto. Presumably the action of the trustees is meant to lead to a reopening of negotiations between the Germans and their foreign creditors, unless the Reich Government takes the risk of disregarding foreign financial and governmental opinion, including that of the U.S.A.

The Temper of the Workers

The Mineworkers' Federation has been meeting in conference this week, and has strongly reasserted its demands for a reduction of the working shift to seven hours (and to six later on) and for a national wage agreement. The railwaymen are also vehemently asserting their demand for a restoration of the national wage machinery which the companies have suspended, and for the return of the wage-reductions made under the influence of the crisis. In these and in other industries there are signs of a rising temper in the Trade Union world, and of some recovery of Trade Union strength since the worst period of the depression. A similar change of temper is noticeable in the resolutions sent in by affiliated parties for the Labour Party Conference in early October. A good many of these, showing plainly the influence of the Socialist League, are directed to securing that the next Labour Government shall make a decisive advance towards Socialism during its first period of office, and shall arm itself at once with adequate powers both to deal with the House of Lords and to control the financial machine with a view to preventing a run on the pound and providing the necessary basis for the finance of Socialist construction. It is true that these Left-wing resolutions come mainly from local parties; but it does

not follow that the big Unions will not support them if matters come to an issue at the Conference.

Beef

It is still not clear how Mr. Elliot proposes to work his beef subsidy so as to ensure that it shall not be paid twice over, first for live and then for dead meat, and how he can secure that the benefit of it shall go to the producers and not to the middlemen. Neither of these looks at present at all an easy problem; and there are few defenders of the subsidy who are prepared to uphold it as anything better than a makeshift. No policy of this sort can be worked without great friction and risk of fraud unless it is combined with centralised buying, as it is to a great extent in the case of wheat. The fact appears to be that the Government promised to give the livestock-producers help before considering how this could be done, and then found the greatest difficulty in devising any workable method that would not violate engagements either to the Dominions or to the Argentine. The obvious way round the difficulty would be to create a central buying agency to deal with both the home and the imported supply, to enter into bulk contracts directly with the overseas producers, and to buy the available home supply at whatever prices might seem reasonable, subsidising the home-grown product out of the margin between the buying and selling prices of the imports. But as this would be "Socialism," it cannot be considered, and we are to have instead a subsidy that is likely to prove an invitation to fraud and a means of enriching the wrong people.

The Unemployment Insurance Committee

The Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee has been appointed this week. It includes representatives of Capital and Labour, an Ulsterman, a leading actuary, and two women, Mrs. J. L. Stocks, of Manchester, and Miss Stephenson, a Wiltshire county alderman. Sir William Beveridge, the Director of the London School of Economics, is an excellent choice as chairman. The Statutory Committee is not, like the Unemployment Assistance Board under Part II of the Act, a full-time body engaged in day-to-day administration. It has the immediate duty of recommending a practicable scheme for bringing agriculture into insurance, and we hope the Government will make no bones about accepting this much-needed reform. But its main function will be to watch over the Fund and to make occasional reports and recommendations, affecting, *inter alia*, contributions and benefits. This will be a very important task, but it will not be onerous, and it will not interfere with Sir William Beveridge's work at the School of Economics. He will bring to the Committee a combination of knowledge and practical experience which few can equal. He had in earlier days a distinguished career in the civil service; he was, moreover, one of the originators of unemployment insurance in this country, and was Director of Labour Exchanges for the first seven years of their existence.

De Valera Scores Again

An Irish correspondent writes: Analysis of the recent local elections in Ireland shows that Mr. De Valera has done even better than his supporters anticipated. The Cosgrave-O'Duffy Blue Shirt opposition were fighting under the most favourable conditions. In Irish local elections there is a property qualification which excludes the poorer section of the populace and in particular those youthful extremists whom De Valera's opponents have always asserted to be his main supporters. Moreover, the Cosgrave party, having absorbed several lesser groups, were able to represent themselves as a "National Non-Party Opposition," and a considerable number of councillors who had previously stood as Independents in consequence joined the United Ireland Party, as the Cosgrave-O'Duffy coalition called itself. In six of the twenty-three counties in which elections were held Fianna Fail obtained an absolute majority, while they control another nine with the help of Independent Republicans and Labour supporters. The United Ireland Party only gained a majority in two counties, Sligo and Cork, and control in six other counties on the Ulster border, where they were supported by loyalist and Protestant sentiment—a form of support which an Irish "National" party relies upon at its peril. The most significant feature of the election was the failure of the United Ireland Party, though standing for the interest of the large farmers, to win the ranching counties of Meath and Kildare. The small farmers are in any case De Valera's supporters and the English retaliatory duties which mainly hit the big farmers were just calculated to aid De Valera's policy of breaking up the big ranching farms. They have certainly gone far towards destroying the political power of the big farmer. In his commendable eagerness to get at the enemy, Mr. Thomas seems inadvertently to have shot down the front rank of his own supporters.

The Issue of Freedom

In a letter we publish this week Mr. J. M. Keynes appeals to those who think liberty important to concentrate on the real issue raised by the attack on Professor Laski. If Professor Laski were a Communist, instead of an outspoken opponent of Communism, if he had said all that he is reputed to have said in Moscow, the issue would have been the same. When we wrote last week we said that the real issue underlying this attack was academic freedom. But the attack had then come only from the *Daily Telegraph* and from some of the more comic Conservative Members of Parliament. The matter became far more serious when the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University wrote to the press suggesting an inquiry by a competent body and when the egregious Sir E. Graham-Little, parliamentary representative of London University, suggested docking the University grant to the London School of Economics. (Incidentally, he is under the ludicrous misapprehension that the teaching there is "communistic," whereas in fact the economics in vogue at the London School is of the extreme *laisser-faire* variety.) Actually, of course, no tribunal is competent or can be competent to inquire into the views expressed by a Professor in his private capacity, and we may assume that the whole question will be quietly dropped. But it is a salutary warning of danger. We have seen revived in this country the spirit of Fascism—the spirit of persecution of opinion, which many had been accustomed optimistically to regard as being as dead as the Spanish Inquisition.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 *Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.*1. *The postage on this issue is: Inland,* 1*d.; Foreign,* 1½*d.; Canada,* 1*d.*

THE REBUILDING OF BRITAIN

ALL political parties, the *Times* urged the other day, should endeavour to reach agreement on housing policy. This counsel of perfection was prompted by the appearance of a bold and comprehensive Labour report (*Up with the Houses! Down with the Slums!*) which the *Times* accuses of being unjust to the present Government. We cannot ourselves see any injustice in it. Sir Hilton Young and his friends stand condemned—not merely by the Labour Party, but by all serious students of the housing problem, including many Tories. They began by abolishing the Wheatley subsidies and talking big about what private enterprise would do. Their original programme of slum clearance was a miserable affair. They have been pushed, it is true, by pressure from all quarters into larger plans of clearance and replacement, but even now their performance is inadequate. And the National Government have never seriously faced the urgent need of houses to let at low rents, a need which private enterprise cannot meet and has not attempted to meet. All this is plain truth, and if Sir Hilton Young is satisfied with it and the Conservatives are satisfied with him, an all-party agreement on housing is about as remote as the moon. Why should other parties butcher their ideals to make a Whitehall holiday?

The Labour programme, which is to be submitted to the Annual Conference in the autumn, is ambitious, as it ought to be. Its demands include a self-contained house (or flat) for every family at a rent it can afford to pay; the abolition of the slums; the thorough repair of every house that can be made fit; "the large-scale replanning of built-up areas, with provision for open spaces; the strict control and planning of developing areas, and the preservation of the countryside." Few will object in principle to any of these aims; only, it will be said, we must have patience—"Rome was not built in a day." Doubtless; but that is no reason why England and Scotland and Wales should not be rebuilt in a great deal less time than is contemplated by the National Government. "Speed is vital," as the Labour report declares; for slums, cellars, back-to-backs, and myriads of grossly overcrowded dwellings are taking their consistent toll of health and happiness. How many new houses, then, are wanted? The Labour Party put the figure high. We are faced, they say, with an immediate need of

> 2½ million new houses in Great Britain, to give each family structurally separate accommodation, to replace the worst of the existing houses, and to abolish the worst features of overcrowding. While, during the next twenty years, if we are to house the nation in accordance with the modern standards we contemplate, anything between five and six million new houses may be needed altogether.

The "modern standards contemplated" are admittedly above those which masses of the poor have been accustomed to—and so they should be, since the aim is not merely "to relieve housing destitution and no more." But the norm of a three-bedroom parlour house, with living room and scullery, equipped with proper conveniences for health and with proper facilities for the housewife, only spells decency, not extravagance.

A less comprehensive estimate has just been issued by Lord Amulree's Committee. They ask for the provision of at least 1,000,000 new houses, to be let at inclusive rents of 10*s*. and under, within the next ten years. But these, be it noted, would be in addition to the 300,000 houses to be built under slum clearance schemes during the next five years, and to those built by private enterprise for sale or letting at higher figures. The Amulree Committee are at one with the Labour Party in seeing no prospect whatever of the lower-rented houses being provided by private enterprise. The exact amount of financial assistance that will be required it is impossible to state in advance, since it will depend on all-in costs, rates of borrowing and local rates. But if the aim is, as it must be, to let half or more of the houses at inclusive rents ranging from 5*s*. to 10*s*. a week, it is clear that considerable subsidies will be needed. At the present time, it is suggested, the former Wheatley subsidies would be adequate for this purpose in most areas. As regards capital, the Labour report makes no specific proposals, beyond insisting on the importance of raising it as cheaply as possible. The Amulree Committee recommend the creation of a new 3 per cent. National Housing stock, fully guaranteed as to principal and interest by the Treasury. At the present time, they state, it should be possible to issue such a stock on a 3½ per cent. basis.

On the machinery for carrying out the reforms there is again substantial agreement between the Labour Party and the Amulree Committee. Neither puts its trust in the Ministry of Health. Both propose the setting up of a National Housing Commission, not to supersede but to assist the local authorities. The Commission would be a permanent body, with a full-time chairman and other members appointed by the Minister of Health, but not under his thumb in their working. It would indeed take over a number of the Minister's powers, and would be equipped with its own staff (including, no doubt, some officials transferred from the Ministry) for the detailed carrying out of the general lines of housing policy laid down by the Government. It should co-operate closely, the Labour Party urges, with the building trades operatives as well as with the local authorities. It should help (in the Amulree Committee's view the Labour report does not refer to this point) to organise public utility societies. And obviously one of the most important of its functions would be the control of building material supplies and costs. The establishment of such an authority was discussed some time ago in a series of articles in these columns, and we feel no doubt that, while the Government refuse to consider it, there is an overwhelming demand for it in the country. The Ministry of Health has been a melancholy failure as the national housing authority. With this Commission as, in the phrase of the Labour report, "the higher command of a great housing crusade," there is a promise of Britain being rebuilt—decently and even more than decently rebuilt—before the Greek Kalends.

But the rebuilding of Britain means more than the provision of new houses. It involves town and country planning, alike for convenience and for beauty. We are glad that the Labour Party are concerned about this. Though they have no space to deal with it fully in the present report, they point to the existing evils, great and small—from the spasmodic and uncontrolled development of industries and towns and buildings to the defacement of both town and countryside by garish petrol stations, advertisements, ribbon bungalows and other hideous

excrescences. They point also to the feebleness of the existing machinery for dealing with the trouble, and to the need for larger powers and more energy in applying them. That there is a wide public interest in this matter is shown by the reception of the L.C.C.'s scheme for the new embankment on the South side of the Thames. The proposal is to acquire the strip of land between the County Hall and Waterloo Bridge, with a view of clearing it of its present unsightly buildings, of extending the County Hall terrace and backing it with gardens and architecture worthy of the site. To this there have been objections raised, and there will doubtless be others. But it is significant that many of the critics have asked for more, not less. They want the embankment to go farther east, and they do not want Mr. Morrison's plan to put a stopper on the project of a new Charing Cross Bridge. These are proper questions to raise. We hope and believe that Mr. Morrison and his friends are alive to them, and that this particular project is the beginning and not the end of plans for embellishing London. It shows a spirit, at any rate, which will be welcomed by all but the most prejudiced of political partisans and the least public-minded of ratepayers. May the same spirit, and more of it, animate the Labour Party when they come to the bigger task of embellishing Britain!

POLITICS AND AIR TRANSPORT

[FROM AN AIR CORRESPONDENT]

No place on the globe is farther from any other place than 13,000 miles. At to-day's normal air speed of over 100 miles per hour, any place could be brought (with night flying) within 130 hours, or six days, of any other place. Night flying and normal air speeds of 200 miles per hour will be usual in less time than is generally supposed. We may reasonably visualise the early prospect of flying from London to Australia in six days. Since 35 days is at present the minimum time taken by other forms of transport, we may say that the world is rapidly shrinking to one-sixth of its former size. A new system of transport is every year doubling its capacity. What international steps have so far been taken to secure proper and healthy growth for this prodigious infant?

Some of the more important nations have arrived at mutual agreements for co-operation. These first took shape in 1919, in "The Convention Relating to the Regulations of Aerial Navigation" (usually known as "The Air Convention"). Other conventions and protocols followed and now some twenty-nine States are parties to the Convention. A permanent Commission for Air Navigation was established to provide machinery for necessary amendments to it. But the Convention loses a great deal of its potential usefulness, because many leading nations have not subscribed to it. Among the important non-members are the United States, Russia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, China, Brazil and the Argentine.

Two other Conventions seek to help commercial aviation between Spain, Portugal, the United States and the Latin-American States. In addition, the labours of the International Air Traffic Association have led to the Warsaw Convention, which now has the force of law. It provides international legal uniformity in the conditions under which air transport operates, and it clarifies the relations between the operating companies and their passengers and the consignors of freight. There is also the Rome Convention, defining equitably the liability of the aircraft operators for damage to persons and property.

Nations have preserved the notion of freedom of the seas by limiting their claims to territorial waters to a zone a few miles wide around their coasts. The remainder of the vast expanse of the oceans is nobody's, or rather, everybody's property, and any ship may voyage on its lawful occasions without let or hindrance upon it. Something of the same kind is necessary for aircraft. How is it to be contrived?

The basic features of the international law under which commercial aviation operates are simple. Each State has complete sovereignty over the air above its territory and territorial waters. No air service can be established without the prior consent of the States over which it proposes to pass, and this consent may be refused without any reason being given. Thus, world-wide political amity is a *sine qua non* for the effective development of air transport.

Unfortunately, the national idea carries always with it its inheritance of envy, suspicion and fear. Since the richer and more fortunate nations are not prepared to share their wealth with their less fortunate neighbours, there is a disposition on the part of the less fortunate to obstruct and hinder any development of the richer. Every nation seeks to be at least equal in technical development to its neighbours, and each seeks to foster the growth of its own aircraft industry. In consequence, each desires to earn as large a proportion of the carrying revenue as possible.

As a result of this economic rivalry, some of the protective methods that have been devised in the shipping industry have been extended to commercial aviation. Thus, there is the well-known shipping principle called "cabotage." Under it any nation may claim the power to limit carriage for hire between two points within its territory to shipping of its own nationality. This is understandable and unobjectionable, but it is to be regretted that the Air Convention permits one nation to be excused from cabotage restrictions that are imposed upon others.

Parallel with this economic rivalry for the lion's share of local air-traffic there is the desire of other nations to preserve their isolation, and to resist, as far as possible, the approach and intrusion of the foreigner. But of all the factors playing their part in international rivalry, perhaps the most vital is that the geographical position of a State may be such that it can, for the time being, hold up to ransom the air-transport of almost every other nation wishing to operate on a great trunk route.

The case of Ifni will serve as an example of the way in which ordinary routine air-transport may be expected to alter the political map. Although Spain has held sovereignty over this small territory on the West African coast for many years, she has not hitherto thought it worth while to occupy it. But the colony has now acquired a new importance, because it lies on the route usually followed by aircraft engaged on the Southern Atlantic crossing between Europe and South America. Ifni is surrounded by territory recently occupied by the French, and is now to be occupied by the Spanish authorities. The intention, of course, is to pacify the region in the interests of the aircraft using this route, but the possibility of collecting revenue from passing traffic has probably not been overlooked.

Nationalism obstructs the development of civil flying in many ways. Documents in enormous quantity have at present to be prepared for international air transport and a number of irksome regulations serve no useful purpose and increase working costs. The health authorities of different States have different ideas concerning the stringency of the measures that should be taken to prevent the spread of disease. Arrivals and departures of aircraft are naturally subject to these measures, and an International Office of Public Health set up by the League of Nations is now attempting to regulate (by mutual agreement) control of this kind.

Arrangements are necessary under which the certificates of air-worthiness issued by one State are recognised and receive validation by other States. There are difficulties of language and currency to be overcome and Customs, quarantine and passport formalities to be adjusted.

But all these complications could be surmounted with comparative ease if the nations could be persuaded to think of air development apart from their individual national

ambitions. We find free development handicapped by nations for directly military reasons, from a desire to favour a political ally, from the hope of profit from the sale of rights, from sheer dislike of progress and of the foreigner.

Many nations see in the personnel of foreign civil air services a nucleus or reserve for the expansion in time of war of military air forces. For, they say, a good civilian pilot would be at least half way towards becoming a good military pilot, and, if he were nothing more than a teacher of flying, he would be a most valuable individual for war purposes. The natural consequence is that in many quarters a strong civilian aviation organisation is regarded as a potential aid to a strong military air force. Nations feel, too, that their military strength or weakness must be hidden, and fortified defence works, or the absence of them, must not be exposed to the scrutiny of travellers by aircraft. Similarly there may be competition between military and civil demands for aerodrome sites. Suitable sites may be rare, and the national military requirements receive preference.

The aircraft developed for peaceful air-route operation are utterly unsuited for military work. Compared with military aircraft they are usually slow, cumbersome and highly vulnerable. Numerically, too, the aircraft engaged on commercial air-transport work are insignificant when compared either with existing military forces or with private and sporting machines.

We give here a few examples of other forms of political hindrance to air development. On the route to India the Persian Government at first permitted the British air line to fly along the Persian coast, but later stipulated an inland corridor, which, by reason of its physical characteristics, was prohibitively difficult and unsatisfactory. As a consequence, it was necessary to rearrange the route, at very considerable expense, so as to avoid Persian territory altogether. An alternative was found on the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf. It is generally thought that Persia loses by the change and that Arabia gains in increased trade and other ways. But it is to be noticed that, while the British air line has been warned off the Persian coast route, the French and the Dutch are permitted to continue to use it. At the same time, it is reported that they need a new permit every week from the Persian Government. How far any commercial undertaking can hope to survive with such insecurity of tenure is problematical. In opposing the British desire to fly down the Persian side of the Gulf the Persian Government probably had covetous eyes on the island of Bahrein, the ownership of which is in dispute, and where oil was recently discovered. Whatever may have been the reasons dictating the policy of the Persian Government (whether military, economic, or just obstructionism) the fact remains that under the Air Convention they were perfectly within their rights.

Again, on the route to Egypt, the Italian Government would not permit the British air line to enter Italy from France along the Mediterranean coast, although it permitted the French air line to do so. Under the Air Convention Italy was perfectly entitled to act as she did, but the consequence for the British air line was that a much less satisfactory route through the Balkans had to be found. The unsatisfactory nature of this Balkan route in winter time led to another route alteration, whereby a train journey from Paris to Brindisi was incorporated in the service. A provisional agreement has, however, now been reached under which it will be possible for the British air line to make yet another alteration and gain in convenience.

Italy regards herself as having special claims to influence in the Near East, and she wished to extend her North African coast air route to Alexandria. In return for permission to fly at all through Italy she exacted permission for her own aircraft to fly to Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus and Palestine. She put forward the proposal that receipts for traffic to Egypt should be pooled, but as her proportion of the traffic earned but a small fraction of the revenue that she demanded no agreement was reached. Eventually, before she would grant Britain permission to fly through Italy by the most convenient route, it may be supposed that she demanded (and no doubt secured) permission for her own services to run to Baghdad, to Alexandria and through Egypt and the Sudan to Somaliland and Eritrea.

The lesson to be learned from all this is surely that the Air Convention has failed to secure its main objective. It does not give that "freedom of innocent passage in time of peace" that is necessary for the proper development of world-wide air transport. Amongst other changes it is suggested that the Convention should be so amended that reasonable grounds had to accompany any refusal of running powers. Governments might hesitate to refuse permission if their reasons for doing so had to be made public.

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5s. for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Mr. Eric Barton.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

The conservatism of cricketers is one of the greatest bulwarks against Socialism in this country. I fear that consequently a much-needed change in this direction will be deferred until the claims of dog-racing and other such pastimes have made a serious inroad on the interest in our greatest national sport.—From letter on Cricket Reform by Lord Midleton in the *Times*.

Man at Willesden police court: "I have lost several weeks' wages through a fatal accident I sustained, and I have been living in hell with my wife ever since."—*Evening News*.

Lowestoft's appointment of an inspector of sun-bathing is reported . . ."—*Daily Mail*.

Keen observers of the army are suggesting that British soldiers are losing their sex appeal, and you can't help feeling that the critics are right.—*Sunday Chronicle*.

If it happened that this increase of the Royal Air Force demonstrated to other nations that we were in earnest with our protestations and resulted in a reduction of their air power, then the money would have been well spent.—The Duke of Sutherland, reported in the *Times*.

It is not the mere presence of the clergy at Lord's that is impressive, but rather the twin stamp of English and Anglican which they bear. You can be sure that they are cricketers all, and because cricket is of the very soul of England it is in England's Church that they have found their vocation.—*Church Times*.

The human leg is a thing which may not see the light of day unless treated by unguents and carefully prepared by devious processes for exhibition. It is even then doubtful if it can bear close scrutiny. —The Hon. Mrs. Reginald Fellowes, quoted in *Daily Sketch*.

In his brief address the Bishop hastened to give the pilgrims an experienced traveller's assurance that although, in a sense, their pilgrimage was to be a Way of the Cross, they need not fear any great trial from the heat of the sun, which was apt to try people harder in England than in the Mediterranean.—From the *Church Times*.

Miss Round said she was proud to have won the championship for Dudley, for Worcestershire, and for England. She thought that her tennis was a gift not to be used for selfish ends, and consequently she was proud to know that a cot for afflicted children was to be named after her.—*Observer*.

He was English to the core, and that in itself is an essential greatness. —From an article on Samuel Johnson by "Sentinel" in the *Morning Post*.

. . . these passages better, to my mind, than anything in *Bengal Lancer*, carry the controversy with Mr. Beverley Nichols beyond the plane of argument. Their purpose is to awaken an intuitive understanding of life at high tension.—From review by Mr. Douglas Jerrold of Major Yeats-Brown's *Dogs of War* in *Sunday Times*.

"THE WILL OF THE FÜHRER HAS THE FORCE OF LAW"

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN GERMANY]

LAST Friday evening all Germany, we were told, held its breath to listen to the Conqueror's account of his victory; never was he so great, nor Germany so united behind him. (Never, it was announced, after the battle of the Berezina in November, 1812, was the Emperor Napoleon so strong.) Yet the streets outside the Kroll Opera House were scarcely lined one-deep with civilian onlookers, though working hours were past. The whole scene presented the appearance not of a popular ovation, but of a Storm Guards' parade. The impression made by the lines of black uniforms combined with the whispers of the last fortnight to create a sinister impression. The "People's Chancellor" was whisked through the streets in a heavily guarded car; all through his speech within the Opera House steel-helmeted S.S. men stood around him. How different from the Hitler who, only the other day, drove through the crowds standing up bareheaded to salute them from his car! As the Ministers went into the Kroll building, General von Blomberg of the Reichswehr was more warmly cheered than Hitler.

"The German Reich is to-day no longer a geographical conception, but a political unity," the Chancellor declared, in describing the achievement of the National Socialist regime since it came into power on January 30th, 1933. Yet ever since that day a gulf has yawned between the Germans who applaud and the Germans who deplore the behaviour of their Nazi masters. The importance of the massacre of the week-end of June 30th lies in the fundamental disturbance it has gradually created even among the faithful; neither the extraordinary admissions in the Leader's twelve new anti-depravity commandments to the Storm Troopers at the time nor the Reichstag speech of July 13th can be expected to put things quite right.

Many S.A. men had heard—we have the Chancellor's own word for it—that they were to rescue Hitler from his subservience to the Right and to the Reichswehr. When their leaders and comrades were shot by Hitler, did they believe the need less great? What if they read a Communist pamphlet about Hitler, "the catspaw of the capitalists"? More important still is the fact that murderous outrages have now occurred among a "respectable" public, which has hitherto been acquiescent. Many a patriot could be ignorant or indifferent when Jews or Marxists suffered. This time, however, S.S. men, of a type which believes in decency, were called out to take part in the "action." They were ordered to join in the firing squads which, for instance, shot the alleged traitors brought to Lichterfelde. They were sickened not only by their task, but by what they themselves describe as the bestial behaviour of some of their comrades. Hitler himself told the Reichstag that three S.S. men were shot for shamefully maltreating prisoners. Cases like that of General von Bredow are also having their effect. Like so many others, the General was taken off at the week-end; a day or two later, his watch, the money he had had on him, and the urn containing his ashes were returned to his family. That is all they know; it is quite uncertain that anything could have been proved against him.

The Government has sent the two and a half million S.A. men, with a few exceptions, "on leave." It has extended its terrorisation to all classes of society. It has shot all those who knew too much; Heines and Ernst, for instance, even in a concentration camp, might have given something away about the Reichstag fire. It might be supposed that the regime had thus become a tyranny of the type which is independent of public opinion. But its bases now are the S.S. and the Reichswehr; each of these bodies numbers something like a quarter of a million, and, in any conflict between them, the S.S. would be helpless. It is therefore perfectly accurate to describe the Reichswehr as the potential masters of the situation. If in the autumn half a million S.A. men are reinstated, this will still remain true. The Reichswehr Generals are professional experts who do not wish to take political action, nor are they likely to be gifted with great political insight. We cannot suppose them to attach very much importance to individual life. But they are susceptible to the "respectable" public criticism which has now been aroused and they are not advocates of military tyranny. Just as Reichswehr influences pressed during 1932 for the National Socialists to be given representation and responsibility in the Government, so they are now likely to press moderation upon Hitler. They are anxious, for example, to exert such influence as may improve Germany's reputation abroad, and, although Röhm's destruction suits them, there is no reason to suppose that they desired his end should be violent.

For the army has refused to be Nazified. It has long been common knowledge that Röhm as head of the S.A. resented the military monopoly of the professional soldiers; why, indeed, should a logical Nazi allow the army to stand aloof in the totalitarian state? The expansion of the Reichswehr, in Röhm's view, offered a suitable opportunity for S.A. and Reichswehr to be merged; he demanded high commands for himself and some of his lieutenants. The professional army was determined to prevent this, and they have carefully picked their new recruits from men outside the Nazi party. The chief significance of Hitler's speech on Friday was the remarkable homage he paid to this principle. And, in so far as the Reichswehr stands for the Germany of 1914, as opposed to the corrupt pseudo-socialism of Röhm, the Chancellor took his stand side by side with reaction. It is interesting, also, that in deference to the Right and to Hindenburg he expressly exonerated the Hohenzollern princes who can scarcely be innocent of attending functions where a change of regime is discussed. Vice-Chancellor von Papen, conspicuous by his absence from the Reichstag, was also pronounced to be a good boy. Yet it was he who delivered the speech at Marburg on June 17th which protested against despotism, and Jung, the man who wrote that speech, has been murdered with the rest. It is impossible, that is to say, to get a definite reply as to his fate, but the Propaganda Ministry thinks he is "dead all right"—"er wird schon tot sein."

It may be assumed that, for some time to come, the army will dominate the situation. Already Goebbels seems to find his foothold slippery, but the Generals will probably preserve the Hitler-Göring façade.

Because the situation has profoundly changed, it must not be supposed that Hitler can disappear tomorrow. It is far too easy for foreigners to belittle him. He makes an appeal to many people who would never join his party, because they believe in the sincerity of his patriotism. What we in Western Europe found most shocking about June 30th was the "Asiatic" disregard for the conceptions of law and justice, but there are still many Germans who genuinely believe that, if Hitler caused people to be summarily shot, it must have been both right and necessary. On Thursday General Göring told the lawyers that the will of the Führer had the force of law (strictly within the S.A. this is true) and when, in the Reichstag on Friday, Hitler claimed that leaders must shoot all those they suspect of treason, even the apathetic galleries were overcome with enthusiasm for this nobly Germanic idea. It is extraordinary, too, what exquisite pleasure many Germans find in the thought of the terrific perils from which they have been heroically rescued. Police in steel helmets and with carbines, guarding the key positions of Berlin, still supply the *décor*, more than a fortnight after the Röhm revolution was to have occurred. It is considered "unsympathetic" to inquire, as I sometimes have, how there came to be such a terrible state of affairs seventeen months after Hitler came to power, or why Röhm was not long ago dismissed. But gradually more people may feel disturbed by perplexity about these things. The Reichstag speech certainly made the Röhm plot seem more credible and exciting, but on the other hand the seventy-seven victims suddenly announced by the Leader

must have startled his most faithful followers. Until then they had heard of only ten casualties; though there is no way of discovering for certain, it seems probable that the number of victims reached well over 200. We have not done with General Göring nor with S.S.—and Gestapo-Chief Himmler yet, but another massacre or so, and the failure of these methods may perforce be recognised even by their perpetrators.

As for the economic situation, it remains to be seen how long the raw materials in the country can last—opinions vary as to the industrialists' stocks. One of the most real dangers is the lack of fodder. The recent potato scare was not serious, but there may be a necessity for food cards in the winter. The industrialists are glad enough to have Röhm and the S.A. out of the way, but the Nazi Party's representatives in the factories are more of a nuisance than ever the Trade Unions were, and a few more buyers at home do not make up for no buyers abroad. Still the swing to the Right will make the new Labour Law an employers' instrument, and, despite the discontents of the moment, Thyssen and his friends can rejoice that they successfully financed Hitler into power.

WATER LONDON

For the Londoner water has become something which always appears when he turns a tap, something he takes for granted, like the air he breathes and the pavements he walks on. He sees the buses and trams marked, "Please Save Water: The Need is Urgent," but if he happens to see them on the Embankment or Westminster Bridge he is not greatly impressed; the Thames seems as full as ever. Or, if he is impressed, he is also irritated; and he wants to know who is to blame for water running short in the hot weather, just when he wants a little extra for his bathroom and his garden. The facts about the London water supply are not generally known.

In the Middle Ages London fetched its water from the Thames near London Bridge, and from its tributaries, the Wall Brook, the Fleet River and the Hole Bourne, names which survive in streets running along their ancient beds. Already in Henry III's reign there was trouble with the supply, and in 1237 the citizens laid a conduit of lead pipes to bring water from the Ty Bourne to Cheapside. The water from the rivers and this conduit was brought to the houses in wooden tankards or tubs by carriers called Cobs. As London and Westminster spread, other streams became useful, such as the West Bourne (which still runs through Sloane Square Station) and, south of the Thames, the Neckinger and the Effra, up which Canute is said to have sailed to Brixton. Throughout the Middle Ages the City Council was responsible for the water supply, and a number of conduits were constructed, usually as a result of charitable gifts or bequests, so that by the seventeenth century there were a dozen at least bringing water to the City from Paddington, Dalston, Hampstead, Hackney, Bloomsbury and other villages. There were also a few wells, but most of these were at some distance from the City, like those at Clerkenwell, Shadwell and Camberwell. For the City of London is built on a layer, varying in thickness, of impermeable clay, and to obtain water from shallow wells it was necessary to get off the clay into gravel districts. The direction of the early growth of London was, indeed, partly dictated by the distribution of the water-bearing gravel-beds.

In Queen Elizabeth's reign the capitalist enters the history of London water. Peter Morise, a Dutchman who had learned about irrigation in his native country, applied for permission to build a water-wheel and pump under an arch of London Bridge for supplying Leadenhall. In 1581, the Council, too timid to undertake the work themselves, gave him, in return for a small rent, a 500-year lease, and the scheme was so successful that he soon had water-wheels in three of the arches, one of them supplying Southwark. These were rebuilt after the Great Fire, which had emphasised the need for a good water-supply, and remained in place till the new London Bridge was built in 1825. Early in the seventeenth century the growth of London away from the Thames northwards made further supplies necessary, and a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to consider the problem, with the result that an Act was passed empowering the City Council to bring water from the Hertfordshire wells near Ware. But the City Fathers again showed a lamentable lack of enterprise, whereupon Hugh Myddelton, M.P. for Denbigh, a friend of Sir Walter Raleigh, a goldsmith and a banker, offered to undertake the work. He had sat upon the Commission, and was well acquainted with the situation. He built the "New River," a channel 38 miles long, to carry water from Chadwell to a reservoir at Clerkenwell. This was completed in 1613, began to make a profit in 1633, and in a modified form is still in use. At different times in the succeeding century new companies were formed, and the areas they served originally overlapped, as Parliament thought that competition would benefit the consumer, and sometimes there would be two mains in the same street, belonging to rival companies. But gradually the companies came to an agreement, and nineteenth-century London found itself dependent upon eight monopolist companies which charged high prices for an intermittent supply of extremely impure water. In the earlier years of the century water was usually obtainable only on the ground floor and in the basement, and it ran for only a few hours at a time and on three days a week. Moreover, most of it was brought unfiltered from the tidal river, into which the sewers were continually discharging. Typhoid was endemic, and in 1840 and 1849 there were outbreaks of cholera. In 1851 the first Bill for unifying the supply was brought in by the Whig Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, and was duly rejected, largely owing to the opposition of the companies. However, the following year an Act was passed which forbade the intake of water for domestic supply below Teddington Weir, and which made strict regulations for covering all reservoirs and conduits within five miles of St. Paul's. In 1880, Cross, the Conservative Home Secretary, proposed the purchase of the companies by a Public Board, but the large price suggested brought about the failure of the Bill, and was the occasion of the fall of the Government. Mr. Gladstone, it will be remembered, said that the Conservative Government had "come in on beer and went out on water." The L.C.C., from the time of its establishment in 1889, kept trying to obtain control of the London water, but the Bill it put forward in 1901 was rejected by the Government on the ground that "Water London" (that is the area supplied by the companies) was larger than the administrative county and therefore many consumers would not be represented on the Council. One scheme was for the L.C.C. to bring water by aqueducts from the Welsh mountains, which would have made the purchase of the companies unnecessary, but the cost of this would have been even higher. In 1902, the property of the companies was purchased for £40,000,000, and to administer it the Metropolitan Water Board was founded, consisting of sixty-six representatives of county councils, corporations, metropolitan boroughs, urban district councils and the conservancies of the Thames and the Lea. This is a type of the public utility company which advantageously replaces the private capitalists, and in 1920 a departmental committee reported favourably upon its work. It provides water for a population of nearly seven and a half millions.

The water from the Kent wells is so pure that it is sent to the consumer unfiltered, but all the Thames and Lea water has to be purified. Storage in itself does a lot to clean polluted water—in one day it will destroy a third of the bacteria present, and by leaving water for a month exposed to the air in a reservoir you kill all the germs of typhoid and cholera, the two chief water-borne diseases. But long storage is not used here, as it produces algal or vegetable growths which greatly add to the difficulty of filtering. Chlorination, therefore, is employed to destroy the bacteria in the water, which is then cleaned by filtering through beds of sand and gravel. A curious fact is that it is not the sand and gravel, but a gelatinous film which forms on top of them, which does the effective

filtering; with the result that a filter-bed does not do its work when newly cleaned, and the water has to go on through a second filter.

Quite independently of the Metropolitan Water Board's supply, a number of large consumers, breweries, gas companies, hotels, large office-buildings and so forth, have their own artesian wells, which give pure water from the porous chalk below the London clay. For under London there is a basin of chalk into which runs much of the rain which falls on the Hertfordshire and Surrey hills. The level of water in this basin has been falling year by year, but fortunately there is beneath it a further supply. The bottom of this vast natural reservoir is made of impermeable gault clay, and if a boring is made through this porous rocks of old red sandstone are found, which are full of water. This deeper supply has been already tapped in several places at a depth of about 1,100ft. But whether private concerns should be allowed to draw uncontrolled on these subterranean waters is doubtful. Under English law the owner of land owns everything under this land, but a well takes water from under all the surrounding land. At present parliamentary permission has to be obtained for the sinking of a well for public supply, but the private concern is subject to no such control.

The present drought is, of course, not the first from which London has suffered. The water supply was gravely insufficient, for instance, in 1895, 1896 and 1898, and again in 1921. But in 1925, the Water Board opened a new reservoir at Littleton, containing 6,750 million gallons, which added 50 per cent. to its reserve supply; and with its present resources a drought like that which made restrictions necessary in 1921 would no longer be serious. But the present drought has had no precedent since records of rainfall have been kept. The consumer would have been justified in complaining about the additional cost both of outlay and upkeep which would have fallen on him if the Board had decided to provide against so improbable an emergency as that which is actually occurring. There is a continual increase in the population of "Water London," and, more important, in the amount of water consumed per head. The provision of increased supplies in the future is, therefore, already being considered, but unless the climate of Southern England is rapidly changing the present situation is unlikely to recur.

Incidentally, it should be remembered that dry summers such as we enjoyed last year and are now enjoying do not greatly aggravate drought, because so high a proportion of summer rainfall is lost in evaporation; and so even a wet August will not do much to relieve the present crisis. In September there will be less water available than there is now, and it is for this reason that we are now being urged, and may soon be obliged, to economise in our use of water. Already hardly any water can be taken from the Lea (which normally provides 20 per cent. of the supply), and the Kent wells are producing less than their quota. East London, therefore, is dependent chiefly on the Thames, which is having to produce more than its usual 60 per cent. of the whole supply. (If the private companies were still in control, there would already be real water-famine in many districts.) The minimum flow per day over Teddington Weir has been reduced by Government order from the usual 175 million gallons to 50 million, and may have to be further reduced, if the dry weather continues. A certain flow must be maintained, not so much for navigation as in order to flush adequately the tidal river.

The ordinary consumption of water in London is somewhere between 300 and 375 million gallons a day, and it is hoped to reduce this to 200 million, which would mean an average daily consumption of about 27 gallons per head. Domestic consumption accounts for about two-thirds of the whole; the well-to-do, of course, always use far more than the poor. The average bath when full holds between 40 and 50 gallons, so that it may be said that anyone whose daily bath is more than half full is using more than his share of the water available.

A DEFENCE OF CURIOSITY

An enormous crowd, we are told, gathered outside the Brighton police-station on Tuesday in the hope of catching a glimpse of Tony Mancini, who had just been arrested in connection with the second trunk murder. "Hundreds of holiday-makers," says one report, "including girls in beach-pyjamas and bathing-costumes, waited for hours" for the arrival of Mancini from Lee. So intense was the crowd's longing to see a man accused of murder that, on the arrival of the car containing him, it threatened to sweep through the police cordon and finally had to be dispersed by mounted police. "The rushes continued as every police car arrived or left."

Curiosity of this kind will be condemned by many people as morbid, but it is only fair to the sightseers to say that most of them would probably have waited quite as eagerly to see the arrival of a member of the Royal Family or to obtain a sight of a much-photographed bride coming out of church. There is no passion more catholic than curiosity. The ordinary human being does not much care whom he goes to see so long as it is someone whom the crowd goes to see. Or, perhaps, it is the extraordinary human being who is usually to be found in a crowd of sightseers. The ordinary man, for example, does not waste his time hanging about the doors of a theatre to watch the arrival of the occupants of the stalls on the occasion of a first-night performance. Even if he were passing the theatre at such a time, he would not think it worth his while to join the crowd on the chance of seeing some woman known to him only through her photograph in the papers stepping out of a motor-car. I think it must be a special crowd of men and women who find a deep satisfaction in looking at people in evening dress. They are for the most part romantics. They associate evening dress with high birth or riches—too often, erroneously—and feel the happier for being able to report that they saw a woman of title, or perhaps even a dramatic critic. They stare at the evening-dress world as at the Paradise of their dreams. What is particularly charming is their complete lack of envy. They get nothing but happiness from the imaginary happiness of the imaginary rich. They may be accused of the vice of snobbishness, but their interest in the rich is too innocent for that. It is as innocent as the taste for novelettes with heroes chosen from the peerage. It is as innocent as the child's delight in the princes of the fairy-tales. At the back of it all there is a day-dream.

The truth is, ordinary human beings are not very much interested in ordinary human beings. They would find life dull if they did not think that the world contained a number of wonderful people—people who somehow make the world a more exciting place simply by being alive in it. To many people half the pleasure of being present at a banquet comes from being in the same room with the eminent guests of the evening. I have often experienced this pleasure myself. I have been at a banquet at which Dean Inge sat at the high table, and I confess that the evening seemed doubly interesting because he was there to be looked at. He made no speech, but his austere and picturesque presence gave a flavour to the occasion. I do not see why looking at people should be considered a less aesthetic pleasure than looking at pictures. Famous men as a rule are as attractive to the eye and the imagination in their own persons as in the portraits painted of them by men of genius. Hence it seems to me that it would be an admirable idea to have an annual exhibition of famous men and women organised on much the same lines as the summer exhibition of the Royal Academy. It would, of course, be difficult to keep it open longer than a week, but I am sure that during the week tens of thousands of people would be willing to pay half-a-crown each to see a collection of all the most famous men and women in England. There would, I suppose, have to be a selection committee as in the Royal Academy, and men and women of local fame in provincial towns and parishes would have to come before it to submit their claims to inclusion. What a downcast expression the Mayor of Pedlington would

wear as he hurried out into his cab, rejected! How surprised the temperance-reciter of Multum-in-Parvo would be to find that he was not considered famous in London! For there is a sad relativity in fame. The giant of the parish is only the dwarf of the county and the great man of the county diminishes in stature as soon as he crosses its borders. Still an exhibition of famous men and women would have to include hundreds of border-line cases and many of the exhibits would, no doubt, be quite as undistinguished as many of the pictures at the Academy.

Even apart from our failure to organise such an exhibition, I do not think that at present we make enough of our famous people. They walk through the streets anonymously. Even so conspicuous a man of genius as Mr. Shaw can pass along a London street unrecognised by great numbers of people who would enjoy staring at him if they knew that he was Mr. Shaw. I have been told that Mr. De Valera, during his last visit to London, was to be seen rummaging among the books on the open-air shelves in Charing Cross Road, unrecognised by anybody. This kind of thing is unfair, for Mr. De Valera is one of those men whom everybody is curious to see. Great men could contribute enormously to the public pleasure by making their presence known wherever they go. Would it not be a good thing, then, if they carried their names on their backs as football-players carry numbers? There were loud protests at first at the degradation of football-players by forcing them to wear numbers on their jerseys. But it enabled the spectators to recognise them more easily, and the spectators were much happier as a result. If great men were as easily recognisable as footballers, how much more interesting London would become, especially to the visitor. The worst of it would be, perhaps, that Mr. Wells or Sir James Barrie or Mr. Noel Coward would scarcely dare to walk down the street for fear of being followed by a curious mob.

Perhaps, however, the curiosity of the mob about men of letters is less than I have suggested. Is there any author living whom Brighton girls in their beach-pyjamas would wait hours to see? Cinema-stars or lawn-tennis players, perhaps, could lure them from their iced drinks and their sun-bathing, but hardly an author.

On the other hand, the world respects fame of whatever sort, and if you are told in a restaurant that a famous man in any walk of life is sitting at the next table you instinctively turn round and take a good look at him. There are towns—but not London—where people would turn round for a good look at a Member of Parliament. I myself am always interested anywhere if a rich miser is pointed out to me. I remember the pleasant curiosity I felt as a boy when I saw a divorced woman for the first time—a rarity then in a provincial town, and as much to be wondered at as the Loch Ness Monster. Actors and actresses—even those who played the tiniest parts—were marvels to the eye. What we long to see are human beings who are different from ordinary human beings—people who break the monotony of the general pattern. And actors and actresses then seemed different, much as gypsies do.

Much of the pleasure of foreign travel is due to the fact that, when we go abroad, ordinary people no longer seem ordinary to us. Everybody whom we pass rouses our curiosity by his difference from the type of human being to whom we are accustomed. The ordinary man is there as individual to the eye as a Dickens character. We do not see him through the lazy eyes of familiarity. We see him imaginatively and therefore more clearly. Curiosity is sometimes supposed to be one of our vices; it seems to me that our great vice is rather a lack of curiosity. At home, we are not curious about our fellow-creatures unless they are forced upon our curiosity by their riches or genius or fame or notoriety. So incurious have we become that many people complain that everybody is nowadays moulded on the same pattern as his neighbour—that human beings have been all but mechanised out of their individuality. This I believe to be a complete fallacy. I doubt whether the sameness of human beings to-day goes much deeper than their clothes. If Dickens were alive I am sure he would find as many odd characters to populate his books with in modern London as he found in the London of Queen Victoria. Consider your own friends and acquaintances. Could anything be odder, more individual, even more eccentric? We see this because we regard our friends and acquaintances with proper curiosity. Machine-made types, however, are as rare among other people's friends and acquaintances as among our own. They are all well worth taking a good look at. Yet we feel little curiosity about them unless they become rich or famous or get arrested. Perhaps this is just as well. If we realised how interesting the ordinary human being is, the police-force might have to be increased in order to prevent us in our curiosity from gathering in mobs round him in the streets. Y. Y.

FOR DICTATORS ONLY

A certain Baron de Skossyreff has proclaimed himself ruler of Andorra and declared war on the Bishop of Urgel.

I was sorry, at first, when I read it; for it seemed an unfortunate fate
For little Andorra to suffer from follies reserved for the great;
But a second perusal revived me, for I saw that it gave me a theme,
And a little reflection suggested the draft of this world-shaking scheme:—
Let us purchase Andorra, Monaco, San Marino—whichever you will—
As a stage, under League supervision, for dictators to show us their skill,
And when *Führers*, or *Duces*, or Mosleys arise and grow reckless in tone,
Pack them off, ere they do too much mischief, to this little reserve of their own.
And there they may stage revolutions and muzzle the Senates and Courts
(With a share, I suggest, in the film-rights and the guaranteed full-page reports),
And issue decrees about morals, and broadcast their views upon taste,
And prohibit the habit of thinking, and penalise humour misplaced.
And make the most wonderful speeches, and weave the most wonderful plots,
And proscribe and dictate to each other (with a background of tear-gas and shots),
Or, when wearied of *putsch* and rebellion, to martial adventures inclined,
Declare war on the Bishop of Urgel and defy, without harming, mankind.

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

PROFESSOR LASKI AND THE ISSUE OF FREEDOM

SIR,—Do not *Critic's* complaints about the use made by the German press of your article on Schleicher confuse the main issue? For your article did in fact confirm the view that Schleicher desired a change of regime and was in touch with Paris. Surely the point is not that Schleicher or Röhm or the others were innocent of the charge of being actual or potential political opponents of the regime but that it is disgraceful to assassinate your political opponents. No additional comment is required, except, perhaps, that it adds to the *personal* disgrace, if they were recently your close friends and colleagues. If, in some cases, the innocent were mistaken for the guilty, that was a very culpable inadvertence, but does not—at least for the outside world—add much to the major indictment.

The same point arises in the case of Professor Laski, if stress is laid on the harmless character and anti-Communistic tendency of what he actually said. Here again what is disgraceful is the attempt on the part of the Vice-Chancellor and the Principal

of the University of London to interfere with the liberty of speech of one of their professors. If it is the case that they are mistaken about their facts in addition to being inquisitors, that is a minor indictment; though it is legitimate to remark that those who depart from the regular procedure are very liable to be wrong about their facts.

When, however, you wrote your excellent paragraph last week, the attack on Professor Laski was limited to a few outsiders. It has taken on a much more serious aspect with the intervention of the Vice-Chancellor and the Principal of the University, who have made the strange declaration that "Professor Laski's action will doubtless form the subject of an inquiry by the appropriate body," and have thought it necessary to disclaim responsibility for his opinions. Is it usual for the University of London to express opinions on the views of its professors? What is "the appropriate body" for this purpose? And when did it last function? One had assumed it to be well established in England, as distinguished from Moscow or Berlin, both that a professor is entitled to the unfettered expression of his opinions and that no one but himself has any responsibility in the matter. But it turns out that it was with a wise foresight that the founders of the London School of Economics expressly provided in its charter for the complete freedom of its teachers in the expression of their political opinions.

Much worse, however, was to follow, when Sir E. Graham-Little, M.P. for London University, addressed (on July 13th) a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, in which, after admitting that "freedom of opinion and of speech are vested with a peculiar sanctity at the University of London, which was indeed founded expressly to welcome aspirants to knowledge, irrespective of creed, race, or political opinion"—so that direct inquisitorial action is rendered difficult—he went on to suggest financial pressure in the following terms:—

> Disciplinary correction of objectionable activities by a member of the staff of a college would be best made by the governing body of the college. But the London School of Economics, where Professor Laski functions, has long been regarded as a hotbed of Communist teaching, and such action by the governing body is consequently unlikely. In the absence of a spontaneous condemnation by the School of Economics of this regrettable outburst by one of its teachers, the Court of the University might conceivably take action by reducing the allocation it makes to the London School of Economics, an allocation which in the opinion of many members of the University is excessive.

What are we coming to! It is hard to know how to characterise the monstrous suggestion of the last sentence! Sir E. Graham-Little is obviously unfit to represent a University in Parliament. He also shows—if I, too, may be allowed a minor indictment—a singular ignorance of what is taught at the London School.

These episodes, great and small—and the Government's Sedition Bill also—emphasise the extraordinary importance of preserving *as a matter of principle* every jot and tittle of the civil and political liberties which former generations painfully secured in their disgust and horror at similar episodes. Inquisition into opinions, the right of search on vague administrative suspicion, political assassination — all doubtless directed, in the minds of those who practise them, to the safety of the State—belong to the same order of ideas, which, as experience taught us many years ago, destroy civilisation whatever they may preserve.

Too many of the younger members of the Left have toyed with Marxist ideas to have a clear conscience in repelling reactionary assaults on freedom. Thus the importance of impressing on the minds of the Right and of the Left alike that not the smallest breach should be allowed in the fortifications of liberty has become so urgent that for many of us THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION takes on a new importance for the sake of the contribution it is making to this object. J. M. KEYNES.

15th, July.

[This letter is referred to in our Comments this week.—ED., N.S. & N.]

MILK FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

SIR,—The Board of Education have turned down a scheme of the Cambridge Borough Council for extending free milk to school children where the family income is below a certain minimum scale. The Board do not criticise the scale, but they take the view that the selection of children for free meals should be made on a medical or physical basis, such meals being definitely associated with the "educational capacity" of the children, as revealed by signs of malnutrition, or at least of a general condition which is, "in the opinion of the medical officer in any way subnormal," and should not be based "on an assumption that children are necessarily suffering from actual malnutrition because the family income is below the scale adopted by the Authority."

Not merely is the Board's decision contrary to the established practice in many areas, where free meals are given on an income basis only, but it imposes on local education authorities a limitation of their powers which seems against the spirit of the law. When the original Act was passed in 1906, a medical basis of selection was certainly not its intention. For medical inspection of school children was established only in the following year! More important, however, than the legal aspect of the Board's decision are its practical results. If the Board insist on a medical test, this policy is likely seriously to curtail the number of "necessitous" children who will benefit from the Government scheme for the supply of cheap milk for school children.

The early effects of malnutrition are by no means easy to detect by physical examination. The signs may be readily missed unless they are specially looked for—which is rather a long business. Nor do they become evident at once. A diet may be very defective, as the Chief Medical Officer has pointed out, and yet, if sufficient in amount, may maintain apparently normal vigour for a considerable time. The inevitable results are only ultimately to be seen in failure to promote a full measure of growth, in lack of physical or nervous energy, in lessened immunity to disease. When it is remembered that routine medical inspection takes place normally only three or four times in the child's school career, that the time allowed for it is strictly limited, that the school doctor must rely to a large extent on the observation of the school nurse, the teacher or the care committee visitor, who has no medical qualifications, it is evident that the selection of children on a medical basis only must involve at least a grave risk that many children will not be discovered until after actual damage has been done to health or growth and "educational capacity" is already impaired.

Nor is it desirable that responsibility for the proper nutrition of school children should be shifted—a tendency apparently encouraged by the Board—from the local education authority to the public assistance authority. Owing to low wages, high rents, or the "many mouths to be fed," there are thousands of families where the bread-winner is in full-time employment and yet the income is insufficient to provide the minimum requirements of a satisfactory diet. These families do not apply for assistance. Even where assistance is given, the scale is necessarily determined to a large extent by the lowest current rate of wages, and is rarely sufficient to meet the needs of large families. It was, indeed, considerations of this kind which led to the passing of the Provision of Meals Act.

If the Board persist in their present policy a full share of the Government's milk subsidy is unlikely to go to the poorer families. For where the family income is at or below the level of subsistence, even a few pennies a week can only be spared at the expense of other necessaries, or small conventional luxuries. There is already evidence to show that it is the mother who too often starves herself for the sake of extra nourishment for the children. This cannot surely be the Board's intention? The Board are said to anticipate that, as a result of the proposed reduced charge of milk made to parents, the number of children receiving it will be increased by about 1,000,000, or a little more than doubled, but this figure will still represent only about one-third of the school population. Nor will it include those children who are most in need of extra nourishment except upon medical evidence of "subnormal nutrition." BARBARA DRAKE

15 Sheffield Terrace, London, W.8.

THE NAUGHTY BOY

SIR,—There is so much common sense and humanity in "A Doctor's" article on the "Naughty Boy" that one is loath to criticise. Unemployment, overcrowding or under-nourishment are no doubt important factors in the genesis of many a young delinquent, and to this extent the prevention of juvenile crime is fundamentally a matter for the social reformer, not the penologist. Nevertheless, I do not believe that "A Doctor's" pessimism as to the possible influence of the Juvenile Courts and of probation is justified. It is certainly true that "boredom and a spirit of adventure" is at the bottom of many a juvenile "crime"; but the important point is that a wise probation officer can do much to mitigate the former and satisfy the latter. To give the boy some outlet for a hobby or to introduce him to a club or a boxing class may be quite enough to put a stop to his delinquent tendencies.

Frequently, too, the root of the trouble lies in bad handling at home, and a probation officer who builds up a friendly relationship with the boy's parents can often, *mirabile dictu*, make the home happier! There is always a cause for any act of delinquency, and the job of the Juvenile Court and the probation officer is to find out this cause and treat the delinquent accordingly.

Obviously this is not always easy. Neither the right diagnosis nor the right treatment may leap to the eye either of the most enlightened magistrate or of the ablest probation officer. In such a case the advice of an expert in child psychology is needed. A few courts do make use of the psychologist, but they are exceptional, and even in these instances the opportunities for a thorough examination are usually quite inadequate. I do not know at what point in the proceedings "A Doctor" examined the children whose cases he quotes. If he did it as soon as they were proved guilty, and if the court and the probation officer acted on the basis of his conclusions, his analysis of the causes of delinquency in each case was probably of considerable practical value. Something on these lines, systematically worked out, is badly needed.

When the Children and Young Persons Bill was first introduced there was a widespread hope that it would include provision for Observation Centres in accordance with the unanimous recommendation of the Departmental Committee on the Treatment of Young Offenders. The failure to do so is a grievous flaw in the Act. There can be no hope of wise treatment for the delinquent, especially the young delinquent, unless we understand the cause of delinquency in the individual case. If this, which seems to many to be a truism, were accepted as the basis of all Children's Court work, its value would be incomparably enhanced, and, whatever the immediate cost, the ultimate saving both of human material and money would amply repay the outlay.

A mistaken economy is also responsible for another weakness in our probation work, namely, the inadequacy of the probation service. There are for the whole of England and Wales only 285 full-time probation officers and 546 part-time officers, for both juvenile and adult work. Considering that in 1932 19,000 persons were put on probation (and the number has certainly increased considerably since), and considering also that many of the officers act also as police-court missionaries and give much of their time to settling matrimonial difficulties, it is obvious that the amount of work they have to do is excessive. If the period on probation is to be worth while, the probation officer must acquire a real understanding of the offender and his background, and develop a real intimacy with the child and his parents. This cannot be done in a hurry. Occasional routine conversations with the child are worthless, yet this is all that many probation officers can hope to give. Moreover, the material, too, is frequently inadequate. Not all Probation Committees show real understanding of the qualities needed in a probation officer, and some, in practice if not in theory, delegate this all-important statutory duty to the officers of the Police Court Mission. Moreover, the pay offered is so poor that the most suitable people frequently prefer other professions.

There is a tendency nowadays to regard probation either as a failure or as the *ne plus ultra* of penology. Neither view is true. With all its limitations probation to-day provides an essential alternative to mere dismissal on the one hand or committal to a school on the other, and the best of our courts and the best of our probation officers can justifiably be proud of their achievement. Nevertheless, there can be no hope of the probation service reaching its full value until it is freed from the grip of the economy-mongers, and until we have a national service, adequately paid, and then adequately backed by the specialised knowledge of the psychiatrist.

CICELY M. CRAVEN,
The Howard League for Penal Reform, Hon. Secretary.
Parliament Mansions, Orchard Street, S.W.1.

SIR,—From our experience (my boy has just finished his year of probation) I do not agree with "A Doctor" who believes the period of probation does not serve any good purpose. The stern warning given by the magistrate and the week in the detention home are soon forgotten, although I was assured "it was no picnic," but the weekly visit over the period of one or two years to the probation officer keeps them from getting into further trouble. In our case the officer—a woman—proved a real friend on more than one occasion, helping with advice to myself as well as my son. After the first few difficult visits, he rather looked forward to seeing her and the interesting photographs which line the walls of her room of boys who have come under her care, in soldiers' or sailors' uniform, who still like to let her know how they are getting on. This year of probation has done a world of good—to me as well as my boy—as we both had mistakes pointed out. On the last day we both tore up *and* burnt the probation papers—took her the bunch of flowers he had bought and proposed still to see her "as a friend, you know."

A HOXTON MOTHER

TO SAVE BUTTERMERE

SIR,—The time for the completion of the National Trust's plan for the preservation of the Buttermere Valley is now very short. £12,500 was needed by the middle of August to protect over 5,000 acres. Never before has the National Trust attempted to preserve the amenities of a whole valley, nor has it ever before carried out a scheme based so largely on restrictive covenants with other landlords.

The Buttermere Valley is recognised as being one of the most beautiful still remaining in Cumberland, as owing to its remoteness it has not suffered from modern developments. The break up of the Marshall estate and the improvement of the roads meant an immediate threat to its beauty.

There is only a month left in which to raise about half the money required. Contributions should be sent to the Secretary of the National Trust 7 Buckingham Palace Gardens, S.W.1.

The National Trust, D. M. MATHESON
7 Buckingham Palace Gardens, S.W.1.

THE ISOKON FLATS

SIR,—In calling your attention to an error in your notice on the Lawn Road Flats last week may I say how much those who are interested in the venture appreciate your remarks. The writer was in no way connected with the designing of the building, which is the work of Mr. Coates. The scheme, however, was inspired and instigated by my wife, Dr. Rosemary Pritchard.

Porthcurno, Cornwall. JACK PRITCHARD

AMSTERDAM RIOTS

SIR,—The article in last week's issue under the heading "The Amsterdam Riots" contains an inaccuracy which should be corrected. Your correspondent states "Rent apart, this family (of seven) is now asked to live on a little under two shillings a week per head."

8.50 guilders = 22*s.* 9*d.* divided by seven gives 3*s.* 3*d.* per head. I do not suggest that even 3*s.* 3*d.* per head is adequate, I merely draw attention to the matter so that the position may be stated correctly.

P. D. SANTILHANO
Manor Dene, Manor Road, Thames Ditton.

EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

SIR,—All who are interested in education must be grateful to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION for the papers it published last week on Education in Citizenship. Your readers will agre that it is impossible for democracy to control effectively the affairs even of one nation, unless it is deliberately educated for the task. Since, as Mr. Eden said in the House of Commons last Friday, "the whole trend of modern science, arts, commerce and letters continually brings the nations nearer and nearer together so that a policy of national isolation is no longer practical politics," the education of the people for national and local government needs to be supplemented and supported by some study of world affairs.

Since 1919 the Education Committee of the League of Nations Union has provided an open forum where the representatives of the great associations of local education authorities and of teachers may meet with other experts and make recommendations concerning the scientific teaching of international relations in the universities, training colleges and the schools. With the aid of a number of "Subject Panels," the Committee has undertaken a systematic review of the contribution that may be made to this work through the ordinary subjects of the school curriculum. One such panel which met under the chairmanship of Dr. Unstead has already published a first report and recommendations on "Geography Teaching in Relation to World Citizenship," and similar panels are now at work for History, Modern Languages and the Arts and Crafts. I should be glad to receive and to bring to the notice of the appropriate panel any recommendations or schemes of work which readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION who have practical experience of the classroom would be good enough to send me.

It is probably true, as Mr. Lester Smith suggested in his valuable paper, that there is already "a large volume of education upon the aims and achievements of the League of Nations in the schools." But much more remains to be done in a subject that is so new to all of us. It is, nevertheless, true that he is the best citizen of the world who is the best citizen of his own country. It is, if I mistake not, the main purpose of the new Association for Education in Citizenship to encourage the deliberate education of boys and girls at present in the schools to shoulder their responsibilities for local and national government as citizens of their own democratic country. In carrying out this work the Association may rely upon the support of other bodies whose special concern is with training in world citizenship and whose purpose it is to see that the foundations of the new world order are well and truly laid.

League of Nations Union, MAXWELL GARNETT
15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1.

C. E. MONTAGUE AND THE *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN*

SIR,—In your interesting description of C. P. Scott's methods as an editor there is a passage which might suggest to some of your readers that C. E. Montague retired from the *Manchester Guardian* on account of a difference over policy. In order to correct any such impression I should like, if you will allow me, to state that Montague, writing to me at the time about his retirement, said that he had never been more completely in agreement with the paper. J. L. HAMMOND

Oatfield,
Piccotts End,
Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

Miscellany

"HAM"

IN the playhouse of to-day the word "ham" is of frequent usage. To some extent it has, appropriately, replaced the "bit of fat," which old actors craved for the enrichment of their parts. Slang words are often vague and are not easily confined by a definition. "Ham" appears to be a general term for all species of bravura. It covers emphasis, flourish, display, tricks of the trade. In the opinion of "ham"-hating people the theatre disgraces itself should it dare to be theatrical.

"Ham" is as much avoided by writers as by actors. The modern play often avoids climax and side-steps, with a most cautious diplomacy, the familiar crescendo of a smashing curtain. It prefers to end a scene on a quiet, almost an irrelevant, line. A subject which would be deemed conventionally theatrical is carefully reduced by the modern play-doctor, whose therapy resembles that of Harley Street. He takes out a great deal, beginning with the teeth, and there is no objection to the inevitable loss of blood and faintness of effect. Let any one compare Gordon Daviot's *Queen of Scots*, moving so tranquilly down the years, with any treatment of the same or a similar subject in the Edwardian theatre. Note the habit of a quiescent conclusion to scenes potentially vigorous. Drama nowadays must be politely suggested; plain statement is bad manners. At the Lyric there is the American medico-dramatic success, *Men in White*. It has the "hammiest" of themes. The man in white has to operate, in front of his official fiancée, on his mistress and mother of his unofficial child. Such a piece might have been called "The Doctor and the Woman" or "The Surgeon's Sin." I am not demanding the treatment which such titles suggest. I am merely pointing out that the author, having fashioned a fable of the most feverish possibilities, gallantly runs away from it and writes with the utmost astringence and a liberal use of antiseptic. He seeks to convince us that a succulent "ham" drama was never in his mind, that he is seriously portraying scenes of medical life, that his interest in sex is purely clinical, and that we are expected to appreciate the high art of realism and not to revel in any high emotional jinks.

The technique of acting has been adapted to this "ham"-panic. Young players would rather mutter a sentence than mouth it. They will not show off and this reluctance, if they are not too competent, has its advantages. If it be lawful practice to play a big emotional moment with one's back to the audience—and that is frequent nowadays—anybody can be an actor on such easy terms. While the author is carefully avoiding the old-fashioned "situation" and the *scène-à-faire*, the actor is toning down what is left, and, as he calls it, "throwing it away." The modesty and timidity (the old school would term it incompetence) of the players now arriving in the front rank are most easily realised when they are cast in a play alongside the seniors of their profession who were taught to act in the large manner, to project their emotions, and to spread their voices. The seniors simply wipe the juniors out. It is now extremely dangerous to cast a play in which the old school must sit at table with the new. The contrast of styles is glaring and shatters all unity of presentation. The result is like a book whose pages have been alternately written by Charles Dickens and George Moore.

The juniors had a case. Ham is better between bread than in large and solitary slabs. There can be fatty degeneration of acting as of the organs. But the reaction from explicit to implicit effects upon the stage has now gone so far that I am pleasurably surprised to meet a little "ham" for a change—as, for instance, in *Living Dangerously*, at the Strand Theatre. I am tired of seeing the "big scene" evaded by actors who seem to be ashamed of their profession. Of course, there are plays and plays. Those which are definitely written in a minor key must be so played, but what is happening to-day is the frequent application of muted acting to subjects which essentially demand a forthright speech and a bolder form of projection. There is a ridiculous shyness abroad—"I couldn't do that. It would look terribly 'ham,'" mutters the conscientious young player of to-day. One is not demanding the return of Mr. Crummles when one suggests that the "ham" conscious actor will put the drama to sleep.

One reason for the present dread of brave speech and large effects is the technique of the talking picture. Nearly all actors make films at intervals; they could scarce live without this second line of defence. Usually they dislike the work, but the rewards are necessary and who shall blame an actor who seeks to keep alive? The words of a film have to be quietly spoken, like a "talk" into a microphone; films are acted for the benefit of adjacent machines, not of an audience that is scattered over a large house. Consequently a small and intimate technique is compulsory. "They won't let you act," I have been told again and again. "A bit of real acting would blow it all to bits." Consequently the actors of to-day spend a great deal of time in unlearning at the studio what they learned—or should have learned—at the dramatic academy, and they come back from their stretch at Hollywood or their weeks at Elstree with a natural dread of rhetoric or emphasis. It is as though a cricketer were suddenly to return to a Test Match at Lord's after long practice with a tennis ball in a gymnasium.

Yet, when actors can be persuaded to let themselves go, not wantonly, of course, but with the controlled vehemence which the old school understood, I do not observe that the audience mutters "Ham" in horror and stays away; usually, being in a theatre, they respond to a frank theatrical appeal. The rhetorical side of acting, which has never been forgotten in France, returns as a welcome stranger. Its danger is bombast, but we are so far from that peril that we can profitably take the risk. Many people who saw the Palestinian Players at the Scala were delighted to find an unintelligible language accompanied by such vigorous miming and unashamed bravura that the verbal difficulty dwindled away. By current West End standards they were "Ham," if such a word can be used of a Hebrew Theatre; by my own they were almost exemplary. It was pleasant to reflect what would happen if these lusty mimes and roarers were to discharge such intemperate talents at the assembled machines of a film studio.

IVOR BROWN

NEW BALLETS

It seems to me that the art of the theatre is absolutely dead at the present moment. If one is in an optimistic mood it is possible to point to the Group Theatre and its production last winter at the Westminster Theatre of Mr. Auden's *Dance of Death* as a herald of a renaissance. Mr. T. S. Eliot's *Rock* may be looked upon as another; but two swallows do not make a summer, and the machinery of the theatre, its economic situation and practical functioning in London seems to have reached that stage of general paralysis in which the various limbs rotate and fling themselves about with more or less violence but always aimlessly.

I had not entered a London theatre for about eighteen months until I met my colleague Mr. Desmond MacCarthy at the second performance of *Queen of Scots* a few weeks ago. With that extreme urbanity which makes him rival the most exquisite man of the world to be found in the pages of Proust he hid from me his opinion of this piece (which certainly is not inferior to any other on the London stage). I was not so tactful. I told him I could see no reason whatever for sitting out half an act of that play or any other play that had been successful in London during the past ten years.

The theatre to-day, so it seems to me, is utterly divorced from life, from imagination and from art, and I see as much difference between a good or a bad, a successful or an unsuccessful, play as I see between two old pennies, one dated 1891 and the other 1892, lying on a dust-heap.

The only sign of any creative artistic process to be found in the theatre (apart from the Group Theatre productions I have mentioned) is in the ballet. Mr. Massine, it seems to me, with his colleagues is actively engaged in artistic production. Within the last two years he has produced three new ballets which bear witness to a genuine creative productiveness; because none of these ballets is a mere dead imitation, a machine-made product such as dramatists present to us in the London theatre. When he produced *Les Présages* it might have been thought that this was a fluke. I must confess that my first reaction to this ballet was to think: well, this only shows how very little there is in the music of Tschaikovsky. It proves that this fifth symphony is so childish, so crudely melodramatic, so unrelated to any life deeper than that of street accidents and detective novels that it can be completely expressed in ordinary visual terms. These running phalanxes and coloured crouchings and leaps, this Guy Fawkesish destiny and its Fascistic servitors fluctuating between submission and revolt—what is it all but the most commonplace of dramas easily accessible to miming. But when Mr. Massine produced *Choreartium*, a visualisation of Brahms' Fourth Symphony, I was astonished. Not that one need think Brahms' music very greatly superior or more inaccessible than Tschaikovsky's, but because the ballet *Choreartium* was so different and such an advance on *Les Présages*. It is also a ballet for the corps and not for soloists, and nothing is more remarkable in this ballet than the variety of invention of movement Mr. Massine has achieved in a choreography which does not rely at all upon miming or character study. It is the great beauty of *Choreartium* that it is predominantly plastic, and that the invention of the choreography should have been so free and so spontaneous within the chosen limits of non-miming, sculptural gestures. The dark cinnamon brown dresses of the corps de ballet are also admirably designed to give full effect to the beauty of the movements of the limbs, arms and torso.

After having made such an advance—a step forward in the visualisation of abstract music—as in *Choreartium*, it is all the more significant of the vitality of Mr. Massine that he should have next presented us with so totally different a ballet as *Union Pacific*. Here we have the miming, puppet-drama ballet once again, and *Union Pacific* is as complete a success in its kind as *Choreartium* is. We are also introduced to a decorative artist new to me, Mr. Albert Johnson, an American, I presume, whose *décor* is worthy of its place in the repertory of the *Ballets Russes*. This ballet is a mimed symbolistic representation of the building of a railroad in the United States in the pioneer days of the eighteen sixties. The scenario is by Archibald MacLeish, who, I believe, is the author of an interesting poem, *Conquistador*, which has been highly praised by American critics. The whole thing is extremely well done, and I think anyone who sees *Union Pacific* at Covent Garden will admit that it is far livelier and more interesting than any play that a contemporary dramatist would be likely to write on the subject. The music is perhaps the least intrinsically interesting element of this ballet; it is by Nicolas Nabokoff, based upon popular songs of the mid-nineteenth century, and if a little too noisy and rather lacking in any special features it is nevertheless effectively done. It is rarely that any one particular dance stands out as a prime feature of a ballet, but undoubtedly this is the case with the Barman's dance in *Union Pacific*. This is a marvellous piece of virtuosity as conceived and executed by Massine himself. The dance is a sort of character study, and not the least effective feature is the astonishingly fine make-up of Massine. The applause on the first night at Covent Garden was so tremendous that in spite of the exhausting nature of this dance Mr. Massine gave an encore. I must also add in justice to the composer that he had made the music for this dance very well indeed.

The sight of the crowded and enthusiastic audiences at Covent Garden during this ballet season leads one to hope that the public may yet knock the drama (as it exists to-day in the London theatres) into its coffin. It would be evident to the dullest that these dreary imitations of so-called "life," and those equally dreary remastications of history which we get on the stage and on the film, are not worth a tin sixpence were it not impossible under present conditions to find anything better to take their place. But if the public would stop going into theatre or picture palace for the space of one year it would bring the present system of anti-artistic mass production to a general collapse. It is curious that although there are all sorts of industrial strikes there has never yet been an artistic strike. Perhaps because in this case it is the consumers who would have to strike. Personally I cannot think of a strike that would be less injurious and more beneficial in its results than a strike that was a complete abstention by the public from theatre and film palace for six months. W. J. TURNER

THE TELEPHONE MAN

LEICESTER SQUARE. *Looking for Trouble.*
REGAL. *I've Got Your Number.*

He is the nodal point of our present indefensible social system. The bourgeoisie relies on the telephone for its assignations, its gossip, its umbrageous intrigues. Without it there is an end to its multifarious activity and it might even have to fall back on solitude and thought. But the bourgeoisie, though the slave of the telephone, cannot understand it, can do nothing with it and is completely dependent on the telephone man. With what relief is he seen to be approaching, so wise, so good-mannered, so well-looking in his boiler-suit, and in a few minutes, gossip, assignations and intrigue once more hold their accustomed sway. It is impossible for the bourgeois not to feel inferior to the proletariat when confronted with the telephone man. And this is the mood which produces revolutions, which are nearly always due to the abdication of the governing class. At the end of the eighteenth century, under the influence of Rousseau, the landowner abdicated to the peasant. In the twentieth century, under the same ideology, the town-dweller is abdicating to the skilled workman. The boiler-suit has replaced the hoe, and its representative is the telephone man.

It cannot be mere chance that the two most amusing films to be seen in London this week deal with the glorification of the telephone man. True, in each case, he is endowed with a comic element which would have shocked a more sententious age. But the four telephone men in these two films, who not

only show the most masterly efficiency, the most unfailing good nature, and the utmost physical courage, also clean up the whole town, which has been reduced to a state of complete savagery by the activity of stock-brokers. Their relations with the other sex are marked by the utmost simplicity. Towards each other they display all the prettinesses of the higher cameraderie, which are incompatible with investments as the double-crossing practices of the speculators show. These are the two most Bolshevik films I have seen.

Personally, I preferred *Looking for Trouble* to *I've Got Your Number*, because Jack Oakie and Spencer Tracy are two of my favourite stars, and because I thought the dialogue was the more amusing. But both pictures, without being absolutely of the first rank, provide an admirable evening's entertainment, as they are extremely fast moving and efficient, full of good staccato dialogue, and decked out with a pleasing variety of incident. There may not be very much to say about them afterwards, but they provide a very happy hour at the moment. And this is the case now, I think, with a great deal of Hollywood work. The utter imbecility and sickening sentimentality have been removed, a technique for dialogue has been evolved which fits the technique of the cinema, and the relation between sound and movement has reached a stage of easy compromise. Any ordinary film-goer would admit, I think, that these two pictures, without any pretence to being better than they are, move comfortably within their shafts. In one way, *I've Got Your Number* is the superior picture. For a telephone and a telephone keyboard are in themselves objects suitable for cinematographic use, and in *I've Got Your Number* they were part of the organic structure of the film, whereas in *Looking for Trouble* they were merely decorative objects of which from time to time the director made use. The film is essentially a machine, whereas a picture is a work of the hand and, in consequence, a mechanical substructure is a valuable logical aid to a film; and this, too, again is in accordance with the spirit of the age. As the machine becomes more and more a dominant factor in civilisation, not only the man who makes or uses the machine but the man who makes technical use of it, for the purpose of providing a pleasure which may be vaguely called aesthetic, will become the hero of the hour. The evolution of society away from the potter's wheel to the motor car, or even the telephone keyboard, is far from giving me undiluted satisfaction. But that such is the case it is idle to deny, and these two pictures are witnesses to its truth. FRANCIS BIRRELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Charlotte's Progress"

In *Charlotte's Progress*, at the Mercury Theatre, Mr. Ashley Dukes has become absorbed in a desperately difficult problem of technique to the diminishing of his proper talent as a dramatist, and the consequent mortification of a reasonably expectant audience. To construct a play upon four duologues may be as simple or difficult as you like to make it, but to maintain an accumulating interest in such an effort demands a more vivid sense of character, a greater cunning of stagecraft than Mr. Dukes has at his disposal. The four scenes present incidents in the life of an apparently hard-boiled young lady who is vaguely determined to lead her own life, without knowing what she proposes to do about certain inherited prejudices. She first runs away to an avuncular millionaire's yacht and suggests that he shall abduct her. When he indicates his willingness to do so on the usual terms she takes umbrage, and bolts with his secretary to the Alps. Together they watch the sunset from a mountain hut and all is ready for her romantic surrender when she discovers from the visitors' book that he is merely repeating a similar adventure of a year ago. In a startling fit of revulsion she hitches herself on to a passing traveller, and we next see them conducting a discreet *affaire* in Chelsea, and secretly very tired of one another. A false alarm of murder in the flat above gives them their cue for a well-conceived slanging bout as a relief to their tattered nerves, and finally Charlotte discovers a meaning in things by undertaking to cure the supposed victim overhead of his suicidal tendencies. Charlotte, who is played by Miss Joan White, is neither silly enough to be amusing nor sensible enough to obtain sympathy.

"Elizabeth Sleeps Out"

Eight actors and actresses of distinction romp through a three-act farce at the Whitehall in a manner entirely foreign to themselves and the theatre. One recovers from one's shock of surprise to congratulate Mr. George K. Arthur on his enterprise. He has evidently insisted on preserving a general atmosphere of the end of the pier on a bank holiday, with a dash of the Christmas charade. There is a delightful charade-like story of inherited millions and love at first sight. Some of the humour is derived from seeing doyens of romance and tragedy in these surroundings. Mr. Frank Cellier's deprecating air is particularly enjoyable, and Miss Helen Haye abandons her Ruritanian-queenly manner and drinks too many glasses of sherry with great charm. Everyone except Mr. Billy Leonard (very funny as a rakish heir) is hopelessly miscast, but this is a great advantage, as it contributes to the holiday high spirits. This farce deserves to run, but the shock may be too great for many audiences.

The Art of Ohel

Ohel, the Palestine Hebrew Players now giving a short season at the Scala, offer something new to London theatre-goers. They *act*, and they are not afraid of acting—but with such sympathy and understanding that they always carry conviction. They are utterly sincere, each player merging his personality into that of the character he is portraying. They seem to creep into the very souls of their parts. So successfully do they lose their own identity that each character achieves a perfect individualisation, complete in itself, yet forming an essential part of an organic whole. Thus, something approaching objectivity is reached on the stage. The version of the story of Jacob and Rachel is a moving love story, handled so delicately and with such humanity that it never fails to convince. The traditional patriarchal Jacob here gives way to a young and handsome nomad, whose feat of strength in rolling the stone from the mouth of the well appears not so much the result of divine assistance but as the familiar attempt of the lover bent on impressing his beloved. The cunning devilry of Laban, the free and hearty way in which he strides through the play, is a creation of a new kind of villain—a combination of twentieth century subtlety with an elemental primitiveness, in which both are preserved.

The *pièce de résistance*, however, of their repertoire remains Peretz's playlet *Hear, Oh Israel*, a charming phantasy of an orthodox Hassidic Jew meeting a young boy whose religious training has never gone beyond the first verse of the "Shemah Yisroël" prayer

Aerial Photographs

The collection of photographs of flying exhibited jointly by Imperial Airways and the *Times* is to be shown in different parts of the country when it leaves Gieves' Gallery. It contains some of the most beautiful aerial photographs ever taken. One (No. 13) is a magnificent cloudscape that will give those who have never flown a vivid impression of that lonely, constantly changing, impermanent world above the earth, which is the new revelation of natural beauty to our generation. The most remarkable of these pictures are, of course, the infra-reds, which have a peculiar beauty all their own, unlike anything seen by the eye of man. Nos. 12 and 20 are typical, showing a slightly dead sea, salty foreground behind which tower the distant ranges of the Himalayas a hundred miles away. No. 27 shows *Sudd*, the floating matted vegetation, often twenty feet thick, on the Upper Nile. It is altogether a most striking instructional exhibition.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, July 20th—
Cricket, England *v.* Australia, Leeds (4th Test Match).

SATURDAY, July 21st—
Athletics, Oxford and Cambridge *v.* Princeton and Cornell, White City.
Sea Songs and Shanties, Hyde Park, 3 and 7.
Conference organised by the Italian Committee of the Modern Language Association, Bedford College, 3. Also on July 22nd.

SUNDAY, July 22nd—
S. K. Ratcliffe on "Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Poet and Thinker," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, July 23rd—
Malvern Dramatic Festival. Till August 11th.

TUESDAY, July 24th—
Juan Orts Gonzalez on "Religious Changes in Spain," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
Tour round Merchant Taylors' Hall, 30 Threadneedle St., 3.30. Tickets (7*s.* 6*d.*) obtainable from the Secretary, King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, 10 Old Jewry, E.C.2.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ON the wrapper of *The Plays of John Marston*, in three volumes, edited by H. Harvey Wood (Oliver and Boyd, 8*s.* 6*d.*), the publishers announce a new series, the Blackfriars Dramatists, in which they hope to include such writers as Tourneur, Ford, Middleton and Shirley "on account of the difficulty of obtaining accurate and inexpensive texts of the Elizabethan dramatists." All lovers of English literature will welcome this project: there have been good editions in recent years of the Restoration dramatists, an extraordinarily accurate reading text of Shakespeare edited by Herbert Farjeon, the definitive edition of Jonson is still appearing, and Mr. F. L. Lucas's edition of Webster is perhaps as good an example of what such an edited text should be as one can find. But the lesser Elizabethans have been passed over and editions of the names proposed are badly wanted, as are editions of Fulke Greville and of Chapman. The most important feature in any such edition is, of course, printing an absolutely reliable and accurate text. There is every indication that the present editor has done this, and he is first to point out how much his labours owe to those of Dr. Greg. The second desideratum is an apparatus of notes sufficient to clear up all obscure passages. Editors are naturally inclined to provide notes which are not wanted and to omit those which are vitally necessary, and Mr. Harvey Wood yields to this common temptation. Thus when Marston writes "grave as a Puritan's ruffe" he stops to tell us that "the short severe ruffs of the Puritans were a frequent subject for jest and allusion," but when someone says, on the entrance of the extravagant grotesque Balurdo: "Here comes Saint Tristram Tirlery whiffe yfaith," he tells us nothing, leaving us to surmise that the saint may have been a knight and that since Balurdo was a great tobacco taker Sir Tristram Tirlery may have been known as such to the audience. Yet there may be a perfectly simple explanation, well known to scholars.

* * *

Mr. Harvey Wood does not often give too many unnecessary notes, but he frequently omits the essential ones and has a habit of referring the reader to a whole library of other scholars. Yet he is content to provide many notes which are similar to those in Halliwell's edition of Marston's works published in 1856. The most disturbing kind of note, in which the editor appears to misunderstand the intention of his author, is also present. Thus we find the phrase "an excellent example of a passage which, beginning as good blank verse ends in metrical disaster," given in the notes to *The Malcontent* where Malevole is warning Bilioso of the danger of leaving his wife at court while he is absent on an embassy.

> When in an *Italian* lascivious pallace, a Lady guardianlesse,
> Left to the push of all allurement,
> The strongest incitements to immodestie,
> To have her bound, incensed with wanton sweetes,
> Her veines fild hie with heating delicates,
> Soft rest, sweete Musick, amorous Masquerers, lascivious banquets, sinne itselfe gilt ore, strong phantasie tricking up strange delight, presenting it dressed pleasingly to sence, sence leading it unto the soule, confirmed with potent example, impudent custome inticed by that great bawde opportunitie, thus being prepar'd, clap to her easie eare, youth in good clothes, well shapt, rich, faire spoken, promising-noble, ardent bloud-full, wittie, flattering: *Ulisses* absent, O Ithacan, chastest *Penelope*, hold out.

One has only to read this twice over to see that on the stage it would be extraordinarily forcible and that it is dramatic in the very style and manner of Mr. Jingle's conversation. Mr. Harvey Wood might just as well have written a note to Pickwick to point out a passage "beginning with good English prose and ending in syntactical disaster." Obviously "the good blank verse" is intentionally interrupted by exclamatory remarks intended to startle the complacent Bilioso.

It is, however, in his introduction that an editor exhibits his critical credentials and gains the confidence of his readers. Mr. Harvey Wood strikes a severe note:

> . . . Shakespeare's compression, though it often resulted in difficulties of sense-interpretation, was always dramatically effective and lucid to these faculties that transcend understanding. The corresponding difficulties of Marston's style can plead no such extenuation. When he most aims at the oracular manner he is most often merely fatuous: his attempts to heighten his style betray him into the most absurd fustian: and under emotional stress, his expression is not merely unintelligible, it is unintelligent, preposterous gibberish.

The reader will scarcely be surprised to find in a comparison of *Pigmalion's Image* with *Venus and Adonis* that "*Marston's poem is in the same metre as Shakespeare's and is not much more indelicate*," and to learn a few lines farther on of Marston's attempt "*to avert his share at least of the censure and punishment which was obviously overdue to the ribald, quarrelsome, and licentious poets of the late nineties.*"

The tone of such editorial discursions smacks of the worst period of Victorian criticism, and is to-day as obsolete as it is distasteful. But perhaps the editor's most unfortunate phrase is in speaking of the "turgid and heavy" prologue to *Antonio's Revenge*, a piece of poetry of which most readers will share Lamb's more favourable opinion:

> The rawish danke of clumzie winter ramps
> The fluent summer's vaine: and drizling sleete
> Chilleth the wan bleak cheek of the numd earth,
> Whilst snarling gusts nibble the juyceles leaves,
> From the nak't shuddering branch; and pils the skinne
> From off the soft and delicate aspectes.
> O now, methinks, a sullen tragick sceane
> Would suite the time, with pleasing congruence.
> May we be happie in our weake devoyer,
> And all parte pleas'd in most wisht content:
> But sweate of Hercules can nere beget
> So blest an issue. Therefore we proclaime,
> If any spirit breathes within this round,
> Uncapable of waightie passion
> (As from his birth being hugged in the armes,
> And nuzzled twixt the breastes of happinesse)
> Who winkes and shuts his apprehension up
> From common sense of what men were, and are,
> Who would not knowe what men must be; let such
> Hurrie amaine from our black visag'd showes:
> We shall affright their eyes. But if a breast,
> Nail'd to the earth with griefe: if any heart
> Pierc't through with anguish, pant within this ring:
> If there be any blood, whose heate is choak't
> And stifled with true sense of misery:
> If ought of these straines fill this consort up,
> Th' arrive most welcome.

The situation of the play which follows is, as Mr. Harvey Wood points out, very close to that of Hamlet, with the ghost of a murdered father egging his son on to revenge. The passage in which Antonio murders his enemy's little son is extraordinarily beautiful and would be most moving on the stage. Antonio is under a compulsion to commit deeds of horror, and we find no difficulty in believing in them. Shakespeare's weakness is that one finds it hard to believe revenge would appeal to Hamlet's intelligence. *The Malcontent*, though it is in some ways a more interesting play, has a plot too involved for the stage: there are too many masks and intrigues, through which a faint flavour of *Measure for Measure* can be tasted, though there is little in common in the two plays but a disguised Duke and the harsh treatment of Lucio and of Bilioso at the end. The comic passages in Marston's plays are astonishingly fresh: the indecency is exactly like that one finds in Webster—or hears on the music halls to-day—and the perpetual double meanings would delight an East End audience, though they sometimes escape the pure intelligence of scholars. There is the same play on the same words as one hears in pubs and in music halls, and for that reason the plays are far more indelicate than the pretty poetry of *Pigmalion's Image*. It is a pity that Marston's poetry is not to be included in this edition. It is always best to have an author's complete works if possible, and in this case it would have been easy.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

The Cat Jumps. By ELIZABETH BOWEN. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
Hordubal. By KAREL ČAPEK. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.
In This Valley. By MICHAEL HOME. *Rich and Cowan.* 7s. 6d.
Duel. By RONALD FANGEN. *Lovat Dickson.* 8s. 6d.

That a certain gift of literary expression—a trick of inventing or reproducing dialogue, of portraying or caricaturing human personages—may exist unsupported by any kind of general intelligence, the average reviewer knows too well. Literary proficiency is not the same thing as worldly sagacity. Of the multitudinous novels that swamp the market, there are few in which the author's vocabulary does not seem to be out of all proportion to his grasp of his subject-matter—in which we are not astonished alike by the richness of his verbal equipment and the poverty of the mental processes it attempts to hide. Miss Elizabeth Bowen is an intelligent story-teller. *The Cat Jumps* includes a dozen short tales; and, although these items are of varying interest, every one of them strikes me as the product of an intelligent and serious mind, the fruit of shrewd observation, conveyed with an unusual feeling for the beauty and dramatic possibilities of the English language.

At their least interesting, Miss Bowen's stories are vivid and brisk. It is a pity, however, that "The Good Girl" should have been printed as the second story in the volume, for here Miss Bowen's method is seen at its most mechanical and the story is little more than a lively and entertaining anecdote. The impression is too facile to be satisfactory. At her best, Miss Bowen is better than shrewd; and while, in "The Good Girl," she is content to hit off a commonplace tragedy from a neighbouring table on the terrace of a large cosmopolitan hotel, in "The Disinherited" she goes to work from a much less unsympathetic point of view, giving us not only a group of neatly yet memorably drawn characters but also enveloping these characters in their proper atmosphere. Emotion and situation are skilfully wedded; the landscape behind her characters is a part of the characters themselves, and the shuttered and sheeted Palladian house, where Davina and her friends hold a midnight party—one of them is acting as librarian to the absentee owner—the raw building-estate on a hillside overlooking an ancient university town, the small country house inhabited by Davina, her aunt, Mrs. Archworth, and the chauffeur, Prothero, whom the reader discovers to be the undetected hero of a sordid *crime passionel*, are all attuned to the tempo of the narrative. Far from being a mere literary embellishment, the landscape Miss Bowen describes is half her strength.

"The Disinherited" is a study in modern heartbreak. Since Miss Stein informed Ernest Hemingway that he was a member of a "lost generation," numerous writers have undertaken this somewhat depressing theme and have deduced an apocalyptic message from the squalor of their acquaintances' love affairs and the high-minded disillusionment that colours their own lives. . . . Miss Bowen, thank heavens, is more discerning. She realises that the horrors of a "hang-over" are not synonymous with the death-throes of capitalist society, and that despair behind lowered blinds in a discreet but expensive restaurant off the Tottenham Court Road may be entirely unconnected with the collapse of modern European culture. For Miss Bowen, the worm in the bud is a subtler opponent. Davina has run through her small income, has exhausted her stock of "good times"; and while Mrs. Archworth and her guests assemble under the glow of pink-silk lampshades to play a sedate game of bridge, Davina and her friend, Marianne Harvey, denizen of the genteel building estate, set off in Davina's baby car and find themselves with Oliver and his two frowsty boon-companions in Lord Thingummy's muffled Palladian saloon.

"The Disinherited" is Miss Bowen's longest and most successful story. I am not sure that the nerve-wracked chauffeur, who sits down to write a letter to the woman he has murdered in a prose-style that—at any rate, towards the end—shows the influence of James Joyce and Mrs. Woolf, is a wholly convincing and impressive personage; but Davina, Oliver and Marianne are extremely good. "The Last Night in the Old Home" is equally accomplished. Pathetic and gruesome are the maunderings of the imbecile Irish heiress in "Her Table Spread." The title-story, on the other hand, which begins with a suggestion of Henry James in "The Turn of the Screw," ends with a flourish too farcical to be quite happy. "Maria" is diverting, though not very ambitious; and "The Man of the Family" displays Miss Bowen's comic sense at her lightest and finest. The comedy is acute but unemphatic, the author's cynicism pleasantly pervasive but under control.

And now back to those literary prairies where men are men—Hordubal is a Slavonic peasant who has passed eight years in an American coal-mine. When he returns he learns that his wife has acquired a lover, and that, at her lover's prompting, Polena has sold the farmlands and the cattle which Hordubal loved, and has taken up horse-breeding instead. But Hordubal is neither jealous nor suspicious. Indeed, he is very stupid—so stupid that to read the story of his adventures is like riding pillion in a slow-bicycling race, and, as the narrative creeps along, the reader has plenty of time to enjoy his own thoughts. . . . Yet the book, after all, has considerable charm. In a world full of fractious and hyper-sensitive human beings, Hordubal reminds us of one of those patient Mediterranean oxen, with their soft leathery dewlaps and big, liquid, perpetually anguished eyes. Mr. Čapek does not dramatise his sufferings; he writes plainly, movingly, if here and there a trifle sentimentally, and never claims that his protagonist's "nearness to the soil" entails any particular spiritual merit. *In This Valley*, a carefully constructed story of rustic love and hatred, of the struggle between squire and farmer, Conservative and Radical, belongs to a more familiar literary countryside, where many novelists have already staked their claims. Mr. Home's book is honest though unoriginal, a painstaking yet unexciting piece of work.

Lastly, a drama of middle age. *Duel*, acclaimed by Sigrid Undset as an important contribution to modern Norwegian literature, deals with the relationship of a pair of elderly friends, Georg Roïter, whose name is known all over Europe, and Klaus Hallem, whose celebrity is confined to a prosperous country practice. Roïter is involved in a financial scandal. . . . A question arises to what extent their friendship was sincere. Did Roïter cherish Hallem, because in his neurotic intimate he saw realised the principle of weakness and instability that he wished to avoid in himself? This problem is worked out with skill and delicacy. The book is a little too voluminous and seems, now and then, a trifle awkward in its English dress. *Duel* can be recommended to such readers as are not deterred by the shades of Scandinavian gloom.

PETER QUENNELL

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QUEEN VICTORIA

Victoria, the Widow and Her Son. By HECTOR BOLITHO. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 21s.

Mr. Hector Bolitho has already placed students of the more purely personal and social aspects of the Victorian period in his debt by editing (with the Dean of Windsor) two volumes of the letters of Lady Augusta Stanley, a volume of letters from the Prince Consort to his brother, and by his biography of *Albert the Good*. This debt is now increased by *Victoria, the Widow and Her Son*. It is an interesting, readable, straightforward narrative of the widowhood of Queen Victoria "with special reference" to the story of her relations with the Prince of Wales.

Mr. Bolitho makes no strikingly new contribution to our knowledge of the period, but his book fills a gap which has long needed to be filled. It is from the study of Lytton Strachey's biography that the reading public of to-day is mainly content to form its judgment of Queen Victoria. But it is precisely the years from 1861 to 1901 with which Mr. Bolitho deals that were most inadequately covered by Strachey. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that Strachey was more interested in the personality of the Prince Consort than in that of the Queen, and that in consequence the story-teller lost interest in his story at the moment of the Prince's death. But it must also be remembered that when Strachey's book was published in 1921, only the first three volumes of *The Letters of Queen Victoria* had been published, and that they only carried the history of her reign up to 1861. Strachey did not revise his work in the light of the further volumes of *The Letters* which were published in his lifetime. It is on this account that the splendid curve of his biography so sadly droops towards the end. Queen Victoria in 1861 had reigned for twenty-four years, and was to reign for a further thirty-nine. Yet to those first twenty-four years Strachey devoted one hundred and fifty-five pages of his book: to those last thirty-nine years only eighty-one pages. But the general reader with a taste for biography can now supplement Strachey's *Queen Victoria* with Mr. Bolitho's *Widow and Her Son*. It has not Strachey's brilliance of style, but it is altogether a thoroughly competent production.

Mr. Bolitho's picture is, it is admitted, more domestic than political. The time is ripe for the appearance of a serious study of the Queen's political influence. Not all the material is available, but there is quite enough to show how seriously Bagehot underestimated the influence of the Crown. About this aspect of the reign Mr. Bolitho himself would almost certainly be the first to admit that he has not spoken the last word. The later volumes of *The Letters* together with the other evidence (particularly Mr. Guedalla's *The Queen and Mr. Gladstone*) already make two things clear. The first is the extent of the Queen's hostility to all Liberal Governments. "The failure of the 1880 administration," writes Mr. Francis Birrell in his brilliant little life of Gladstone (a model of a short biography), "can be largely attributed to the time wasted quarrelling with the Court." Rosebery, who in his approach to the Queen was almost as chivalrous, as gallant, as flattering as Disraeli, was as Prime Minister no more successful in securing good relations with her than had been Gladstone. The second is the extent of the Queen's influence over appointments. Lowell in his *Government of England* remarks that "it may be said that with Peel's appointment to office in 1834 the principle was definitely established that the Prime Minister chooses his colleagues, and is responsible for their selection." That principle was certainly not one of which Queen Victoria would seem to have been aware. She said her say not only about appointments to the Cabinet but also about the junior posts in the Ministry until even Gladstone, quite one of the most loyal of her subjects, was constrained to minute one of her letters with the comment: "This is intolerable," and that in his case was indeed going very far.

Mr. Bolitho's system of references is extremely faulty. For a great many incidents he states no authority at all. What, for example, is his authority for repeating (p. 296) the old story that on the night when news of Gordon's death reached London Gladstone was seen at the theatre? In other cases he does not make it clear whether his reference is to a published or to an unpublished document. It is high time also to enter a general and a strong protest at the habit, unfortunately not confined to this book, of not vouchsafing a single particle of information about the originals of the illustrations.

FRANK HARDIE

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MOTHER WATSON

The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes. By VINCENT STARRETT. *Nicholson and Watson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

"Granted the opportunity, gentlemen—one might cry, in paraphrase of Doctor Bell—of recovering a single day out of the irrecoverable past, how would you choose to spend that sorcerous gift? With Master Shakespeare in his tiring room? With Villon and his companions of the cockle shell? Riding with Rupert or barging it with Cleopatra up the Nile? Or would you choose to squander it on a chase with Sherlock Holmes after a visit to the rooms in Baker Street? There can only be one possible answer, gentlemen, to the question."

Since the passage is taken from Mr. Vincent Starrett's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, the answer can only be what we fear it to be, and, as such, must give rise to a real anxiety about the author's condition. There are other passages in this book which suggest that it is fitter material for an analyst than a reviewer, but it may be possible to discover the more superficial processes at work behind this extraordinary cult.

Detective stories are not in themselves a dangerous drug. They provide sedentary readers with the illusion that life is exciting, that violence and crime lurk in the dull routine, in the tube, the club-house, the local garden party; and, besides stimulating the imagination, they add an intellectual problem—"who did it?"—as harmless as a good cross-word puzzle. They set up no toxin, they are easily procurable, nor is it possible to take more than one at a time.

Why should the Holmes and Watson stories differ from these as much as heroin and morphia from bromide and aspirin, and reduce their addicts to the maudlin state of Mr. Starrett or the pedagogy of Father Knox?

Like other detective fiction they affect both intellect and imagination, but in a more deleterious way. The appeal to the imagination is one of period: "what a picture they disclose of London at the century's end," writes Mr. Starrett. "Is it too much to claim that social historians in the years to come are more likely to return to Watson than to the dull McCarthy, and the sardonic Strachey?" and he quotes William Bolitho on Sherlock Holmes: "He is the fog in that crying old street, Baker Street, the glow of sea-coal in the grates, where the English servant brings in to you tea and muffins and snug napkins of odorous toast." He is in fact a sentimental transatlantic evocation of quaint old mother England, like the beefeaters or the Cheshire Cheese, and the nineties are the enviable period in which culminated the tired distinction of old races, the corrupt European tradition. "Cabs slurring through the mud," continues William Bolitho, "sounds and sights and presences of the old nineties in Baker Street—that time and that place which above all thought itself final and that nothing different was ever going to happen again."

This stampede back to the Watson womb is not as distressing as the effects on the intellect of the Holmes legend. It is a pity that Wilde and the Yellow Book aren't good enough for Mr. Starrett, that Max Beerbohm weakly chose Enoch Soames to write about and not some delightful landlady in the "crying old street." But, granted the nineties are chosen for an escape, a spiritual home, it is in detective stories, which must convey a great deal of information about people in a very short space, that the circumstantial detail, the minutiae of living can be studied.

It is this detail which has appealed to what the "sardonic Strachey" called the "pedantry of incomplete academic persons." As an undergraduate, Father Knox read a paper on Sherlock Holmes in which he analysed the structure of the stories and the characteristics of Doctor Watson in the language of German exegesis and the Higher Criticism. The early burlesques of Sherlock Holmes were chiefly crude parodies in which ordinary scribblers hit back with schoolboy facetiousness at the superior person. Father Knox's was a perfectly legitimate piece of undergraduate brilliance, intended to illustrate the havoc the Germans could make of the testaments. It was enlarged and reprinted in the *Essays on Satire* where the emphasis was placed on the discrepancies in the life of Dr. Watson, and the youthful squib became the occupation of grown men. There is a nostalgia for scholarship. The satisfactions of meticulous research seem enhanced when viewed by the imaginative writer, to whom "the dons on the dais serene" appear like a stately liner to a man tossing on a fishing smack. Those who have visited a senior common room on Sunday morning, when the pipes are puffing and the dons sit round solving Torquemada in little syndicates, will have plumbed something of the shallows of academic whimsy—and how much greater is the academic whimsy of those outsiders who wish to recapture the feel of scholarship, the security of their early days! For the commentators on Doctor Watson are chiefly those who have been in and out of colleges without actually belonging to them, just as Baron Corvo was in and out of seminaries.

Thus the Watson cult now combines an intellectual with an emotional escape. Back to Baker Street, where there are muffins still for tea, a settled income for the middle classes, no danger of getting run over, and Mother Watson, the goddess of Mediocrity, triumphant, of Not having to make up one's mind, there to welcome us; and back also to the common room, the metaphysical limericks, the acrostics ("can anyone think of a main besides the Spanish main?") and the homeliness of exact knowledge. Two examination papers are included in Mr. Starrett's book, one from *Punch*, and one from *Life and Letters*, which can be attempted by readers of the appropriate mental age.

The list of contributors to the subject is an imposing one. Those who have written articles on Holmes and Watson include, in America; William Bolitho, Stephen Bénet, Heywood Broun and Christopher Morley; in England, Sir James Barrie, Edward Shanks, E. V. Knox, Ronald Knox and A. A. Milne. There must be room for many other contemporary essayists in that paradise of the soft-boiled.

What is the place in literature of Conan Doyle's books when the homesickness and precious fooling they engender is set aside? As far as detective fiction is concerned, the stories are hopelessly out of date. They are not funny, nor probable, nor thrilling, nor intellectually honest. They contributed far less to the art than their predecessor *The Moonstone*, and to the great claim of the modern detective story, that it is the most perfectly constructed form of contemporary writing, they can make no pretence.

Mr. Starrett's book will not enhance their reputation. While the Knoxes, S. C. Roberts, H. W. Bell and Thomas S. Blakeney are scholars at play, he is an amiable middlebrow, concerned not with the intricacies of textual criticism but with the emotional fervours of a labour of love. He is a bibliophile and full of infor-

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mation on the " untold tales of Dr. Watson " and the first editions of his hero. " Over one's bookcase, holding the first editions, hangs the original of a favourite illustration . . . no doubt there are better pictures in the Louvre, but at the moment one would not care to trade." It is not, however, the gem of Holmes drawings, which he calls " a most whimsical conception." This is the " memorable picture " of which his description deserves quotation, partly because it illustrates his style (" casual " is the operative word) partly because his sense of humour is Mr. Starrett's most unreassuring symptom.

> Possibly the most humorous libel ever perpetrated upon the name and fame of Mr. Sherlock Holmes was a drawing that appeared a decade or so ago in a leading comic journal. One remembers it with happiness. With the utmost consternation depicted on his familiar features, the great detective is shown upon a pebbled beach, his hand clapped wildly to his brow, while his tragic eyes consider all the stones that lie around him. Millions and millions of them, far as the eye can reach. And underneath the print the artist's casual comment: " Portrait of a celebrated detective regretting his rash decision to leave no stone unturned."

There is only a glimpse of the real story, the tragedy in the Jamesian sense—the struggle of Conan Doyle to kill off the character who was making him so much money in order to devote his time to " serious " work. The results were to be expected. The money flowed in with each revival of the world-famous character. The author grew more self-conscious. The critics more severe. The fans, who were young in the nineties, found in the later stories a great falling off. As a Cornish boatman remarked; " when Sherlock Holmes fell over that cliff he may not have killed himself but he never was quite the same man afterwards."

CYRIL CONNOLLY

WHAT FUN WAR IS!

The Dogs of War. By F. YEATS-BROWN. *Peter Davies.* 6s.

The English are frequently and justly envied because of their faculty for making capital out of their disabilities. If an Englishman finds himself unable to avoid doing or suffering something disagreeable he proceeds to turn it to moral account, affirming that he does it from a sense of duty and suffers for the good of his soul. Major Yeats-Brown is particularly fortunate in this respect. Knowing war to be inevitable, he is convinced that it is noble. Yes, even *modern* war is noble. He quotes de Quincey with approval: " War has a deeper and more ineffable relation to hidden grandeurs in man than has yet been deciphered; " and comments complacently, " Millions of my generation have seen and touched this grandeur." " We know," he adds, " we of this generation how great those days were! " (I think of men dying of typhus, crawling with lice and coughing up their gas-filled lungs. I think of men maimed for life, blinded for life, maddened for life; of a street in Germany in 1919 where children with rickety limbs and the pinched, yellow faces that proclaimed chronic under-nourishment were struggling for some scraps of food. . . . " Grandeur? " Well, perhaps, to some tastes.) He walks meditatively through the battlefields and along the Bruges-Zeebrugge canal, feeling " the glory of sacrifice that haunts these places." (I think of my best friend strung up on a barbed wire fence, partially disembowelled, praying during fifteen long hours for a bullet to put him out of his agony. . . . " Glory of sacrifice? " Well, well!)

Major Yeats-Brown has much to say of ennobling danger and ignoble security. Geneva is rebuked because it " has no bread to offer but the stone of safety "; while conflict is praised as " valuable to humanity." War evokes in him the same mystical emotions which in previous works were aroused by Yogi. " Tears," he confides, " come to my eyes at the sight of great ships and brave flags "—a characteristic which, he informs us, he shares " with the Sitwell charwoman." There is also talk of " Dawn at Vallombrosa " and the " Sea Wrack of Trafalgar "; the Holy Blood is introduced, Saint Januarius is prayed to, inevitably the " Muezzin " sounds and women are invoked as " the heart of heroes."

Well and good, or well and bad, according to your tastes. But what *is* odd is to find this mystical admirer of pain, this enthusiast for danger, this scorner of safety, seeking to establish precisely those conditions which, if he is right, obviate pain, preclude danger, ensure safety, and so degrade the human race. Though not a pacifist, he is, he says, " a peace lover." He clamours for more aeroplanes because " they will promote peace not war," and grumbles with indignation, as if he were the national bowels, because the Government's defence policy is endangering the country and making for war. But if war is inevitable, why the fuss? If ennobling, why the alarm?

I wish I could understand what the Major would really be at. I have tried very hard, but I must confess that he baffles me. He writes quite nicely, but, the fact must, alas, be admitted, he does not think very well. He has a good style, but a poor mind. As for his immortal soul, anybody who thinks that the blinding, scorching, dismembering and asphyxiating of human beings is morally elevating is a case for the psycho-analyst; an earlier generation would have said for the devil. And so, commending Major Yeats-Brown to the consulting room or to Hades according to our theology, let us take leave of him.

C. E. M. JOAD

NEW RURAL RIDES

Rural Britain: To-day and To-morrow. By J. A. SCOTT WATSON. *Oliver and Boyd.* 5s.

To ask a man to be a modern Cobbett over the wireless is to ask for an impossibility. Cobbett was possessed of decided opinions and of strong prejudices, and it was in his very blood to launch forth into tirades. Tirades are looked on askance by the B.B.C. Naturally enough, therefore, Scott Watson—though a countryman to the core—showed himself rather more the professor and rather less the Cobbett. This no doubt was necessary in the talks, but was it necessary in the book? We think the book, wholly admirable as it is as a picture of the diversity of rural England and of the diversity of farming, would have been even more readable and to the purpose if Scott Watson could have let himself go just a little more. He has the Cobbett in him; of that there is no question—witness his not uncertain and really decidedly courageous praise of beer. He leaves us in no doubt what he personally thinks about smallholdings, though we have to disentangle his views from what comes dangerously near to being an academic discussion. Like Cobbett he is quick to seize a point and to draw a moral. The glass bottle as an advertiser of good milk with plenty of cream, he tells us, has led to Cornwall having assumed almost a pioneer position in the matter of the wholesale use of pure breed cattle—the Guernsey, of course.

Scott Watson, we suspect, shares with Cobbett a greater interest in the fat lands than the poor lands. He does not venture in his car over any of the more inaccessible of the Welsh hill country, and, talking of the industrial North and Midlands, he is glad to think that the manufacturing towns are no affair of his. But these towns are very much an affair of rural England. They belch out their hideous stream of smoke and fumes which spoil thousands of acres of country. The sheep, the grass, the trees all are grimy over enormous stretches of what should be beautiful hills and moorland. Then there are the dumps, dumps from lime quarries, dumps from coal and other mines—a dreadful legacy from the lead we gave to the world's industrialisation. It is an interesting fact that almost any refuse, provided as such it is not poisonous, is good for grassland. There lie the dumps, by no means all of them poisonous, and to a large extent on the fringe of the very types of grassland which could eat up the refuse with unquenchable avidity. There, too, are the unemployed.

Scott Watson, poor man, had always to have one eye on his watch. Again and again he leads up to a line of thought which if he had been on horseback, and not tied to schedule, we are convinced he would have developed, and perhaps even into a tirade worthy of Cobbett himself. He is obviously not happy about some aspects of road " improvement," and what a subject for a rural " rider! " Corners unnecessarily widened, inappropriate and unsightly fencing, nowhere for a man to ride, and, most devastating of all, ribbon development, and always the bringing together of the cities and hardly anywhere the opening up of beautiful and inaccessible country. The city worker (we are thinking of the small car owner, the cyclist and the pedestrian), no less than the hill farmer and the potential land improver, would benefit enormously by a network of reasonably well surfaced, albeit narrow and difficult, roads penetrating into the less well known moorland and mountain regions. To cite the case of a block of country we happen to know particularly well, and over which we have taken a car into the most uncompromising of places, and to suggest merely a beginning, we would advocate, for example, the conditioning of the roads from Devil's Bridge to Rhayader; from Strata Florida to Abergwesyn; from Machynlleth to Staylittle; from Ponterwyd to Talybont. Nor must we forget the country lad and his motor bicycle—for some of us who know the country well would be

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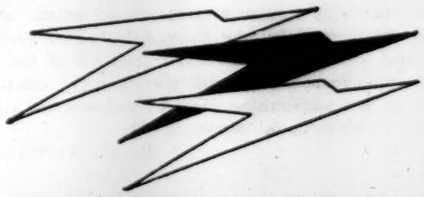

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inclined to place the motor bicycle even in front of the wireless as an agent making for the new and better rural Britain.

We hope that this account of Professor Scott Watson's rural excursions and his views of current tendencies, optimistic on the balance, will be widely read by the townsman. The diversity of rural Britain and the complexities and intricacies of the agricultural industry are realistically and convincingly discussed, and the illustrations are admirable. The Professor after all has much to offer that Cobbett could never supply.

R. G. STAPLEDON

WINGED VICTORY

The War in the Air. Vol. IV. By H. A. JONES. *Oxford University Press.* 17s. 6d.

Winged Victory. By V. M. YEATES. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

Invasion from the Air. By FRANK MCILRAITH and ROY CONNOLLY. *Grayson.* 7s. 6d.

My Air Armada. By ITALO BALBO. Translated GERALD GRIFFIN. *Hurst and Blackett.* 18s.

The Scarlet Angel. By ALBAN ALI. *Duckworth.* 10s. 6d.

I place Mr. Jones' history before Mr. Yeates' novel on this list because, having read Mr. Yeates first, I know that if one is to read both it is better for one's peace of mind to reverse the process. These books—the official and the unofficial history of the closing stages of the war in the air—meet like Broadcoth and Down-at-heels in life's enigmatic street. They pass without recognising each other, and yet they have certainly met before. I think it more important to look into the puzzled eyes above the dirty neckcloth and hear what comes out of his mouth than to engage the other gentleman in urbane conversation. But that is partly because Down-at-heels got at me first: I can't get his voice out of my head.

Of all those employed in the business of war, the official historian is the most Olympian. Blood has dried, bones have whitened, rage and fear and lust and courage have withered before he comes on the scene to straighten it all out. His business is with numbers, nouns of multitude, generalised judgments, phrases hallowed by tradition. Mr. Jones, nearing the end of his vast and admirably conducted survey, loses none of his patience and thoroughness, but remains rather more permanently above the battle than usual, and so his latest volume is not as readable by the inexpert as his earlier ones. He deals here with 1917 and the first months of 1918, when it was discovered that a good way of shaking advancing troops was to dive on them and bomb them from a few feet up:

"A feature of the period dealt with was the development of air attack against troops, transport, and similar targets on the ground. These attacks reached the peak of their intensity during the German advance on the Somme." And again, "The human element must be considered. The fighting pilots, during the March retreat, knew how dire was the position of the armies for which they worked, and they knew also that theirs was the opportunity and power to take effective action to stem the German advance. They flew down, time and again, day after day, to within a few feet of the ground and performed many acts of gallantry that will for ever go unrecorded."

Yes, one calmly assents, but one does not really consider the human element. It happens, however, that Mr. Yeates in *Winged Victory* drags us sweating day by day through the very battle which Mr. Jones surveys from a distance. The nouns of multitude have gone: the unit is the Camel aeroplane and the man who survived six months of flying her in front of Amiens in the spring of 1918. The calmness of one's assent to Mr. Jones' unrecorded acts of gallantry vanishes when Mr. Yeates records the acts and splits the gallantry into its elements—fury, fear, exultation, recklessness, pride, distrust. Tom Cundall, the hero (if that is the word for him) of *Winged Victory*, does 163 flying jobs during his six months, and at least half of these are recorded. In detail, accuracy, and variety, in knowledge of tactics, of the motions of an aeroplane and the emotions of the man in it, these descriptions of Tom Cundall's war compose incomparably the finest picture of air warfare that has yet been painted:

"They could see the hell of a war on just in front of Albert and towards Beaumont Hamel. Then Beal went right down over the roofs of Albert, out of which all sorts of transport was pouring along the Amiens and Doullens roads. In a few seconds he was shooting up a wave of advancing Huns. Tom followed him closely. Bursting shells bumped him about. The air must be thick with bullets. He saw holes in his planes. There were thousands and thousands of Huns; piles of dead and masses of living. He dropped bombs that could not miss, and dipped and fired, and pulled up and dipped again. South of Albert the line no longer swung east, but seemed to go straight south: a tremendous advance must have been made by the Germans. Suddenly his engine cut clean out. Something vital had been hit. He turned west, and as he was doing a hundred and thirty he could glide some way even from a hundred feet. He was across the line in a moment. Machine guns were rattling at him, and then he was over a ridge and out of range. He glided down the declivity. God, it was a marvel they hadn't got him, gliding straight across their front like that. Thank the Lord the west wind was very light that afternoon, or he would never have got away. But he still had to make a landing on ground that was rough and pitted. He pancaked, bounced, and flopped upside down into a shell hole, cracking his head on the backs of the machine-guns. . . ."

But even in 1918 one was not always looking into the sun for Huns, or diving on them out of a cloud. One could sit up there at peace and wonder what one was doing:

"The earth swung and tilted, and the horizon adjusted itself to the laws of flight. It levelled. The dark smudge of Arras came slowly towards the stationary armada perched in the furious wind with airscrews furiously turning to save it from being swept away by the gale. The aeroplanes kept almost perfectly still, only bumping up and down a little and moving slowly a foot or two backwards or forwards among themselves. The chequered world, some of its rectangles greening with April, crept past below. It would move in whatever direction they willed; Tom sitting there in the noise and the hard wind had the citied massy earth his servant tumbler, waiting upon his touch of stick and rudder for its guidance; instantly responsive, ready to leap and frisk a lamb-planet amid the steady sun-bound sheep."

The war, however, for men like Tom, who thought too much and had too much time to kill waiting for the next job, was mainly a question of resisting the erosion of cynicism and funk. It was bearable for innocent fervent youngsters like Allen; or solemn prigs like Grey; or fiery Hun-getters like Beal. It was not so bad for Williamson, who knew how to keep his hatred of the bunkum and racket and sickening confusion of the ageing war in

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It [the great war] was brought about by muddle-headed enthusiasts like Major Yeats-Brown talking panicky nonsense about defending one's sister — J. B. Priestley in the News-Chronicle

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their place. But Tom, who in six months gained neither death nor glory, but only influenza and a few days' leave, and who saw all his friends go west, had a private war on with his visceral Adam :

"No doubt it was this old visceral Adam that made all the fuss about being killed, and turned one stiff and cold with fright and got hold of nerves and pulled them taut. It was no use reasoning with Adam ; you might as well tell a scared baby to stop its yelling. You had to soothe him, cajole him, get him interested in something else. You could say, 'don't be frightened, we won't go too near the silly old Huns ; we know all the tricks and we won't be caught.' Then you might try 'look, nobody else is frightened. You be a brave little Adam like them, and don't let them see you crying.' And again, 'be a good Adam and daddy will give you lots of nice things,' and you took him up for joy-rides in your aeroplane and chivvied people on the ground, which made him laugh ; you poured alcohol on him that made him wildly excited till he fell asleep ; you found girls for him to play with. Adam's delights were easy to get for him in war time ; had they not been, millions of Adams would have been yelling day and night, driving their owners mad, and that would have been bad for the war."

Mr. Yeates has written a superb history of these intermingling wars. His method is cumulative, as any description of the effect of a slowly turning screw must be. No doubt Tom felt the screw more than most, and no doubt Mr. Yeates, writing long after the event, has brought some of the bitter wisdom of retrospect into his tale. But the reader meets the hard, indefinable shock of reality on the first page, and is powerfully braced by it, against length, monotony, pity and terror, to the very end. If war is to be anatomised in tranquillity, this is the way to do it.

So much for the last war in the air. What of the next ? At present it is largely locked up in technical reports and in the studied ambiguity of political utterances. *Invasion from the Air* is a crude, impressionistic, but in some respects effective anti-war propagandist novel, which lets a very black and horrible cat out of the bag. A Franco-German frontier incident is ignored by an England convulsed in a Test Match crisis. Eleven days later London, Berlin, Paris and Rome are in ruins and there is not a stable government in Europe. If all the European statesmen were like the nitwits which the authors put in charge of these islands, eleven days to perdition does not seem too short. None the less, it is something to have a plausible translation into human terms of that little understood, but well-worn phrase : "there is no defence against air attack."

General Balbo has written an account of the flight of his twenty-four seaplanes to America and back *via* Iceland and Greenland, without making it very clear whether this was done in the interests of war, of peace, of aeronautical progress, of the Italian nation, of the Duce, or merely to celebrate year 10 of the Fascist calendar. Probably a little of all these. It was all continuously and intensely gratifying and congratulatory, in spite of bad weather and the loss of one or two lives and machines. It is not immediately obvious what aeronautical object was gained by taking so many seaplanes over so much land. However, the Duce was always at the other end of the wireless telephone, to cheer and be cheered, and the receptions were great fun. There is little to be learned about flying, but a great deal about the emotional hubbub of Fascism, in this fulsome book.

"The Scarlet Angel" was a Comper Swift light aeroplane which Mr. Alban Ali, a government official in Assam, bought to get him home on leave quickly. He did not manage this, partly because he stopped in Delhi to take part in the air race for the Viceroy's Cup, and thus started home with an engine which needed overhaul and finally let him down heavily short of Cairo. His account of these adventures is padded out with tourist chit-chat, but the adventures were stout enough, and when Mr. Ali is describing his flights he forgets to be facetious and writes well.

BARINGTON GATES

SOCIAL SERVICE

The New Philanthropy. By ELIZABETH MACADAM. *Allen and Unwin.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The practice of "philanthropy" or "charity" is no longer what it was. Soup-kitchens have lost their savour ; Lady Bountiful, if she has not yet disappeared, does not run riot in the land ; and the school of thought which arose to counteract her lamentable activities by more cautious, not to say deterrent, methods has lost its old influence. "My criticism of your voluntary humanitarianism," said Mr. Morgan Jones, M.P., "is that it has been a sort of charity dispensed by members of the upper classes. It was a charity which often gave them a pleasant sense of power and virtue and was sufficient to wipe out any responsibility they might have felt for the unhappiness and poverty of the 'lower classes.'" But this charge has lost its weight. The voluntary social service of to-day, as Miss Macadam observes, is no longer the prerogative of the "upper classes." The "social worker" is, in fact, becoming more and more harnessed to the car of the State. The new philanthropy, in Miss Macadam's definition, means the partnership of statutory and voluntary social service.

How the partnership has developed during the last thirty or forty years, its strong and its weak points, and the lines on which it may be expected to develop in the future, is discussed in this book with sound sense and clarity, with a full background of knowledge, and without any of the cant or jargon which so frequently hangs about the subject. Miss Macadam's survey covers the main social services—health, housing, public assistance, education, the treatment of delinquency. She stresses the need of co-ordination, and the equally great need of proper training for those engaged in social work, whether as officials or volunteers. Her criticism of bodies like the Charity Organisation Society, which persist in the old tradition, is generous as well as just. She appreciates the virtues of the C.O.S., but deplores its "blind clinging to interpretations of social principles designed to fit an entirely different world," and its opposition to one legislative reform after another. Its history might have been different, she suggests, had Sir Charles Loch lived longer. Perhaps she is right ; Loch might have kept the eyes and ears of his fanatics to the earth, as Lenin, in a larger and different way, did those of his followers in Russia. But this, after all, is a vain speculation ; the fact is that the C.O.S. has remained in the clouds, and devoted though its adherents may be their power, for good or for ill, has dwindled steadily.

For the many voluntary agencies which exist, Miss Macadam thinks it would be well to have an effective system of supervision and co-ordination. This might be achieved, she suggests, by the establishment of a voluntary central Board of Charities, together with another permanent consultative board, or interdepartmental committee, dealing with the statutory public services. The proposal seems to want rather more argument than is given to it in this book ; some people may suspect that the central Board would unduly enhance the power of the "voluntary humanitarians." That, however, is not Miss Macadam's purpose. She does not profess to be an out-and-out Socialist. But she is firm in her belief in the predominance of the State and municipality in the social services, only claiming for the volunteer the opportunity to supplement and vivify the work of the official—to be, in Mr. Sidney Webb's phrase, "the eyes and fingers of the Public Authority"—to carry out pioneer experiments, or to pursue activities calling for closely individualised or highly specialised work. Such forms of communal service have nothing to do with class patronage, and they should play an important part in the evolution of a Socialist society.

SHORTER NOTICES

Two Young Men See the World. By STANLEY UNWIN and SEVERN STORR. *Allen and Unwin.* 16*s.*

Twenty-two years ago Mr. Stanley Unwin, accompanied by Mr. Severn Storr, set out upon a world tour to study bookselling conditions in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Both the young travellers wrote a journal in which they recorded their adventures and the results of their observation of the countries they traversed and the people whom they met. From those journals the present book, by a process of selection, has been compiled, and the result is a peculiarly personal and lively record of pre-war travel. Of their adventures among booksellers they tell us nothing, which is regrettable, for to know who and what was in demand in Africa, Australasia, Japan and the Pacific Islands in the year 1912 would probably have been both entertaining and instructive. But that is the only complaint that may be made against a book that is packed with vivid description, set down without any thought of publication, and consequently lacking the naive self-consciousness that mars so much of our literature of travel. The editing and compiling have been done with such skill that, although at one moment Mr. Unwin and at another Mr. Storr is writing, there is no break in the narrative. The book is fully and beautifully illustrated.

Entertaining the Islanders. By STRUTHERS BURT. *Lovat Dickson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Any hopes of satirical or humorous holiday, aroused by the title *Entertaining the Islanders*, were flattered, but too elaborately and faintly

Sartorythmics

The advent of " a new science in the sphere of knowledge " was heralded with becoming modesty in a short letter to *The Times* the other day. The writer, in a friendly argument about the fit of a coat round the neck, had been informed by his tailor that he " did not understand the principles of collarology ! "

The note of exclamation is ours, not because we are surprised by the word collarology, but because we are amazed at the abysmal ignorance (forgive our vehemence !) of the customer. The letter was headed " A New Science," but is it a new science ? Our own records show that it goes back, at least, to the days of Goss the First.

Has the backwoods writer of this astounding letter never heard of lapelology, scissorology, backstrapology, measurology or even misfitology, to mention but a few of the departments in the science of sartorythmics ?

But to return to collarology. It is, perhaps, the acid test of first-class tailoring—this fitting of the collar. Just take a furtive look at the coat-collars of your friends ! If the cut of the coat round the neck is perfect then you may bet your latest Goss suit that the rest of the cutting and fitting is as it should be.

The Goss brothers are qualified in all the " ologies " of sartorythmics ! They hold the same degrees as their best fellow practitioners in the West End, but their consultation fees are decidedly less.

The moderation of the Goss brothers' charges has, however, very little to do with their tailoring. When you buy a Goss suit, nearly all your payment goes into materials, labour and a reasonable profit. Very little covers the modest overheads of first-floor premises in Newgate Street ; you are not charged a penny for somebody else's credit, because Goss's ask every customer, old or new, to pay cash.

These are the simple economics of Goss tailoring, plus the fact that the more important parts of the work are done personally by the two brothers.

Therefore you need pay no more for a Goss suit of the very best materials than Seven to Nine and a half guineas, whilst there is a wide range of thoroughly dependable materials costing no more than Six guineas for a suit. Dress Suits Eight to Twelve guineas. Whatever you pay, the standard of Goss tailoring is always the same.

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flattered, when the Governor of the Island appeared. The Governor wore plus fours upon stick-like legs and disapproved perseveringly but quite uselessly of nature's fecundity, which was secretly fostered in a swampy corner of the botanical garden by a Scotch Calvinist gardener. The Island changed hands without apparent reason: the British firmly planted botanical gardens, the Swedes good-naturedly continued them, the Americans finally arrived to standardise and disapprove. By this time I had really had enough of the book and a would-be tense and actually sticky love-story did not compensate for the lack of entertainment. The object of *Entertaining the Islanders* is to entertain nobody; it is to unload a cargo of mild American observations about civilisation, New York, South Carolina and West Indian islands. The burden of the tale is that the world is too much with us, and we go on hearing about it for 422 pages in the words of the author and of Mr. Julius Wack, his insufferable podgy chorus. Neither Julius Wack nor the refined amorousness of David and Anita, who are supposed to be the last word in reaction against city superficiality, and who finally retire to South Carolina to grow cotton or whatever they grow there, provide essential glue. The book is never a book. Unfortunately there is good writing, good observation and some sense in it. One passage must be commended without reserve as Conradesque: the scene wherein an islander searches for the mutilated body of his faithless mistress in the wake of a hurricane. The rest is too mildly sententious to be bearable. Apparently the Book Society and the Book Guild liked it.

Ranji. By ROLAND WILD. *Rich and Cowan.* 15s.

The Cream of Cricket. By WILLIAM POLLOCK. *Methuen.* 5s.

The Story of the Tests in England, 1880–1934. By CECIL KENT. *Hutchinson.* 1s.

Mr. Roland Wild has written an official biography of the late Jam Sahib of Nawanagar—better known as Ranji—which should be of great interest not only to the cricketing world but also to the general public. Indeed, Ranji insisted that his biographer should *not* be a cricketer: he wished the world to remember him as something more than one of the finest batsmen that has ever lived. Mr. Wild has been faithful to his trust. While his cricket career is fully considered, the greater part of the book is devoted to Ranji's enlightened rule of his State, and his efforts to better the lot of his people by slum clearance and modern methods of sanitation. His services in the war and his interest and enthusiasm for the League of Nations are not forgotten. The book is much more than an official biography: it reveals a character simple, generous and full of charm which explains his popularity among Indians and English alike.

The Cream of Cricket is a book of reminiscences extending over forty years of the game. Mr. Pollock has a sound judgment of players past and present, some shrewd observations on the spirit in which cricket should be played, and a fund of stories which no lover of the game can fail to appreciate. His remarks on Frank Chester, probably the greatest of all umpires, are particularly welcome.

The Story of the Tests will be of service, this year especially, to those followers of the game whose "ancient history" needs mugging up. How many common spectators, for instance, knew that, at the end of the last rubber, each country had won fifty-one matches?

The Approach to Economics, by H. M. SCOTT, listed in the Bibliography in our last week's issue, was attributed to the wrong publisher. It was published by Messrs. Christophers.

Week-end Competitions

No. 227

Set by John Roberts

Seeing a photograph of the Prince of Wales riding a tricycle reminded me of a competition set one evening years ago at a party of STATESMAN contributors. We were asked to think of the title of a book that would be expected to have the smallest world sale. I think it was Emil Davies who won with *How to Ride a Tricycle*. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half-a-Guinea for the title of the best worst-seller, accompanied by a descriptive note or publisher's "blurb" of not more than 250 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, July 27th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The results of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION 225

Set by R. Ellis Roberts

The columns of the *Times* have in the last week or two contained accounts of many Public School speech-days, and of the speeches delivered at them. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for any of these:

1. A speech by Mr. Winston Churchill at Dartington Hall School.
2. A speech by Mr. H. G. Wells at Eton College.
3. A letter from any pupil at either school to a friend criticising the speech-day proceedings.

Report by R. Ellis Roberts

Only one angry Etonian rose to my bait, and protested in vehement language at my impertinence in calling the sacred rites of the 4th a "speech-day." While there were some excellent entries—all in the form of letters from pupils at Eton or Dartington—I was disappointed at the general inability to parody two such distinctive styles as Mr. Winston Churchill's and Mr. H. G. Wells'. I had hoped that Mr. Wells' lively, discursive, quick-moving manner was sufficiently familiar to all our readers for them to attempt plausible imitation . . . but most competitors were content with those seductive little dots. . . . Nor did Mr. Churchill's oratorical antitheses, sounding metaphors and rhetorical appeals find better imitators. Nearly all the competitors were content to reproduce what they held to be the prejudices and principles of these two publicists.

Nor did enough competitors recognise that, since the days of Dr. Lyttleton, at least, there has been a Radical as well as a Conservative tradition at Eton, and that there would have been nothing necessarily out of the way in an invitation to Mr. Wells to address that school: there might have been an entry in which Mr. Wells would have appealed to Etonians as his natural allies, the Samurai of the open conspiracy: and the entries which dealt with Winston Churchill at Dartington underrated that politician's versatility and the average child's response to it. There was general agreement that most of the pupils at Dartington are unable to spell—I do not know what authority there is for this opinion. Of the competitors who have attacked Mr. Wells at Eton, Allan Laing, A. M. Ellerington, E. V. Warne, are commended; and so would be T. E. Casson, if he had not made the unfortunate mistake of clothing some of Mr. Wells' ideas in the language of Mr. Winston Churchill.

By far the best entries are those which give the speeches not directly but as reported by school-boys or girls in letters to friends.

The first prize goes to "Prietripsis"; while "Furnivall's" and "Me's" letters about Mr. Churchill's speech at Dartington are humorous and full of good points, the second prize must go to the masterly brevity of "Nitsuj's" epistle; his flippant misinterpretation of the school at Dartington deserves a prize were it only for its impertinence.

FIRST PRIZE

A. B. Comfits, Esq.
Eton College, Windsor.

DEAR GEORGE,

I enclose something which may help to relieve the agonies, a cutting from last Thursday's paper. There you are! "Mr. H. G. Wells to address Eton College on Speech Day" (!!!!). Good, isn't it? ("Speech day" is, as of course you know, one of Eton's most cherished functions. "I noticed the Honourable Lady Guggenheim walking with her brother, the young Marquis of Hogswasch. She is, of course, a cousin of Lady Delia Dotty's, while her brother is in Mr. Dumper's house.") On reading about Mr. Wells, I naturally donned my mortar-board soon after "Monitors' Mess," made my way through the "Quad," and eventually barged into "Big School." "Prep" was just over, and when we were assembled The Doctor, standing on the dais, a birch in one hand and a prayer-book in the other, began as follows, "Boys" (and every fellow trembled) "I have called you here about a very serious matter."

Sorry! No, actually, of course, it was an ordinary Friday afternoon lecture in School Library. The great man, about five foot high, ape-like and vaguely twinkling, was quite impressive. Squeaky little creature. Quite fun. Pretty priggish, of course (just as sentimental really as that grand "Boys, before God, lets put our backs into the Empire" man—do you remember?) but he had a sense of humour, though you wouldn't have supposed so from some of the things he said. Did you realise, for instance, that the corps is one of the most powerful militarising forces in the country and that we're all almost as keen on it as we are on Chapel? Or that we learn no modern languages, know nothing about the modern world and learn no history except military history written from a jingo point of view? I loved that part; so did Joliffe who had just been given a raspberry for showing up a French essay on Stalin two days late. There was a lot of terrific stuff, too, about Life and Progress. And then came the dear old World State. Jolly good, too. No, honestly it was. It's the sort of thing which

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". . . a book of reminiscences which contains more really good stories than we have come across for a long time. There is one superb one about a man who . . ."

Dr. Laurie has had a varied life and gives us amusing glimpses of many outstanding personalities. When he writes in serious vein he writes with authority on the various subjects on which he is an expert.

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Subscribers about to go on holiday are reminded that the Publisher must receive Change of Address instructions by first post Wednesday morning to be effective. Permanent as well as temporary address should be given.

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it's obviously superb to aim at and yell about, but which would be intolerably boring if you ever got it. Still, there's not much chance! I liked the little man. He told us at the end that before he came he'd hated the idea of us, but that now he'd seen us he didn't feel so gloomy about the world after all. Sweet, wasn't it? He should try living at M'tutor's for a bit.

The House Cup, etc., etc.

Yours,

PATRICK

P.S.—SPEECH DAY! MY GOD!

SECOND PRIZE

A Letter from John Smith (*aetat* 13) to his mother.

Dartington Hall.

Dear Phil,—I am sorry I have not written this term but no news and home soon. Someone called Churchil gave a speech the other day about india and Britten but as we do not do history or geog most of us went to the farm towards the end as a new carf was being born there. We told Durry that we did not like it much and liked the bally we had last term more and he said so did he and he was sorry and would not do it again. we make lovely sider here please send more cigs. home soon. with love john

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 82.—THE SISTERS

"On what principle," I asked a cousin of mine, "do you decide on the sum that you divide between the two girls? Two Christmases ago it was £6 17*s.* 6*d.*; this Christmas it was £9 2*s.* 0*d.* Odd, it seems to me."

"The principle," said my cousin, "is quite a simple one. You must remember, the girls are getting older. I try to strike the happy mean between undue lavishness and parsimony."

How much will the sisters divide in two years' time?

PROBLEM 80.—THE PRESIDENT'S SALARY

Let m be the number of electors chosen by the majority party.

Let n be the number of electors chosen by the minority party.

Then $m^2 + mn - 2n^2 = K$ where K is a constant for 9 different values of m and n, while $m + n$ is never less than 80, nor greater than 200.

Now $m^2 + mn - 2n^2 = (m + 2n)(m - n)$

and since the difference between $(m + 2n)$ and $(m - n) = 3n$, and m and n are integers, we have to find a number yielding nine pairs of factors, the difference between which is a multiple of 3, which in other respects conforms to the above conditions.

This number is 6,480, which factorises as under:

$(m - n)$.	$(m + 2n)$.	m.	n.	$(m + n)$.
(80)	(81)	—	—	—
72	90	78	6	84
60	108	76	16	92
54	120	76	22	98
48	135	77	29	106
45	144	78	33	111
(40)	(162)	—	—	—
36	180	84	48	132
30	216	92	62	154
27	240	98	71	169
24	270	82	106	188
(18)	(360) Ec.	(114) Ec.	(132)	—

Hence the President's salary is 6,480 *thalers.*

I know of no means of proving formally that this solution is unique. Perhaps some mathematician can supply one.

PROBLEM 79.—THE POINTER

A set of Low's cartoons goes to P. Bracelin, H.M.S. *Shropshire*, c/o G.P.O.

There were eighty correct solutions.

Six points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

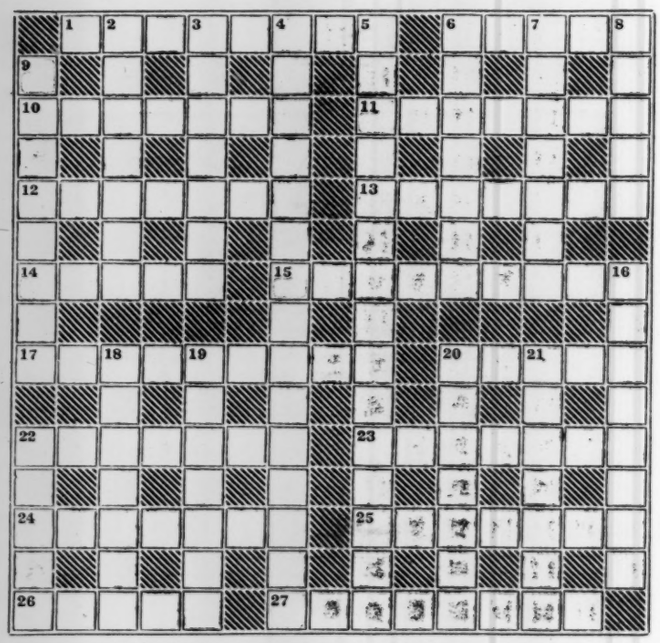
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s.* Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 228

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

The winner of last week's crossword is
Gerald Gardiner, Briars, Fair Oak Lane, Oxshott.

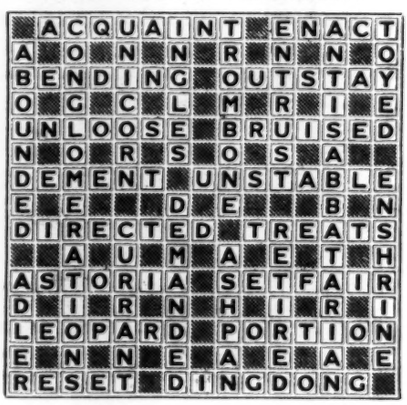
ACROSS

1. Refreshment at the swimming pool.
6. Relief often supplied in strips.
10. What a player would have done for an encore.
11. Travels by air when clad in his purple.
12. Her progress might be called a counter march.
13. Though this spirit will not intoxicate, one is likely to lie low after it.
14. Lorna's "grandfather."
15. Theatricals for entertaining one's stable companions.
17. Weapons of those whose war trophies were 19.
20. In his time the Navy might almost have been described as a peepshow.
22. Neapolitan form of Mafia.
23. This aim is to win back.
24. Orlando's description of the Forest of Arden.
25. Wall was in the Second Test.
26. Plant which sounds as though it needs a scythe.
27. These may be paid without loss to one's pocket.

DOWN

2. Hercules stole their Queen's belt.
3. Turn up short for Percy.
4. State of health that in Britain might be said to be overcast.
5. Sheep catchers.
6. A point in the cure is the seizure.
7. Once a sea for financial trouble.
8. Comb that often brushes up against a dandy.
9. Not lanthorn but horned light.
16. There's something very small at the end of this valley.
18. When you see La Bohême weep it's just acting.
19. Her suit seems to be that of a penitent.
20. To piece a flower together.
21. One of the rebels of 1381.
22. Reckon the title.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD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BENDING OUTSTAY
O G C L M R I E
UNLOOSE BRUISED
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H'DROME. Mr. Whittington. Thurs. & Sat.

PALACE. Why Not To-night. Wed. & Th.

PHOENIX. Ten Minute Alibi. Thurs. & Sat.

PICCADILLY. Counsellor-at-Law. Tu. & Sat.

ROYALTY. Podrecca's Piccoli. W., Th., S., 2.40.

ST. JAMES'. This Sat.
The Late Christopher Bean.

S. MARTIN'S. The Wind & the Rain. Tu. & F.

SAVOY. Clive of India. Thurs. & Sat.

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HOLIDAY PARTIES, Etc.

TWO AMERICAN BOYS, 11–14, hiking through England, August, under adult supervision, seek TWO COMPANIONS, share expenses.—LEWIS, 5 Broomwood Road, S.W.11.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE GERMAN MESS—NEW GOLD PROPERTIES IN SOUTH AFRICA—MR. CAN AND MR. CAN'T

IT is a striking commentary on the victory which Sir Frederick Leith-Ross scored over Dr. Schacht that the German 7 per cent. (Dawes) loan should have fallen from 67 to 58, and the 5½ per cent. (Young) loan from 49 to 43. It is beginning to be realised in the market not only that the Dawes and Young agreement is for six months only and that the Hitler Government may not last so long, but that even a clearing house would not suffice to collect the interest on Dawes and Young loans if Germany went on an "import" strike. If German chemists were really allowed to do their worst (or best), they could invent or find substitutes for many raw materials which Germany is now importing. Moreover, the British Treasury will probably find direct agreements being made between Germany and the raw-material exporters within the British Empire, which will ruin the London entrepôt trade and extinguish the favourable balance which Germany at present enjoys in its trading with Great Britain. The metal trade between this country and Germany has already been shattered. In 1929 Germany imported from the world goods to the value of Rms. 13,446 millions: in 1933 she imported only Rms. 4,204 millions. She might cut even these attenuated imports by another 66 per cent. I would draw attention to the following table, which indicates how seriously this catastrophe would affect the British Empire:

German Imports of Raw Materials in 1933

Million Reichsmarks

Imports of	British Countries.*	U.S.A.	Four Overseas Countries.†	Other Countries.	Total.
Textile raw materials ..	223	225	35	172	655
Oil, fruits and seeds ..	65	2	175	27	269
Non-precious metals, scrap metal, etc.	51	22	18	111	202
Skins and hides	11	1	36	66	114
Total	350	250	264	376	1,240
Percentage of total imports from these countries ..	48%	52%	55%	15%	30%

* United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Egypt, India, Union of South Africa and British West Africa.

† Argentina, Brazil, China, Dutch East Indies.

Sir Frederick Leith-Ross will soon find out that he has won a pyrrhic victory.

* * *

If diamonds are being bought by rich Germans for hoarding, in anticipation of an inflation, gold shares are still being bought by British investors in anticipation of the eventual stabilisation of sterling. That there should have been a sharp set-back in the shares of East Rand Consolidated because shareholders in South Africa were disappointed over the Spaarwater subscription rights may have mystified the London market, but it is time for the stolid British investor to realise that Johannesburg is no longer thinking of the proved Rand mines, but is gambling on the unproved. The shares of the proved mines are too "heavy" to interest Johannesburg speculators. The big money is now to be made (or lost) out of the untried or developing properties. The centre of speculative interest is the Far East Rand, where the gold-bearing reef does not dip steeply into the ground, but takes the form of a subsidiary basin, the floor of which lies at a comparatively shallow depth. East of a line drawn from Sub Nigel, the richest mine in the world, to Van Reep Deep, where the two basins merge, the formation is nowhere too deep for profitable working. The payable ore in Sub Nigel is found in longitudinal channels or "shoots" oriented south-east and north-west, and everyone in South Africa is speculating upon the "shoots" of Sub Nigel cross-cutting the properties to the north-west of that mine. It is practically certain that the Sub Nigel "shoots" cut north-west directly under the Vlakfontein No. 8 property. The Sub Nigel workings have not yet reached the boundary line, but as values have improved as developments go northwards it seems probable that Vlakfontein 8 will be as rich as Sub Nigel. There will be no public offer of Vlakfontein 8 shares, but Consolidated Goldfields, which has agreed to purchase the property from its present owners, Lace Proprietary, will place the shares on the market as and when they require cash for development. And it is worth remembering that Sub Nigel is entitled to subscribe for 20 per cent. of the shares so issued. When Vlakfontein is finally introduced—it may be this autumn—there is bound to be an unseemly scramble for the shares. A price of 60*s.* is already being discussed—and 100*s.* in a year's time!

* * *

To continue this geographical and speculative excursion—I must apologise for the absence of a map, but I have to keep this page distinct from the puzzles—my readers must imagine the Sub Nigel "shoots" traversing Vlakfontein 8 in a north-westerly direction and extending under the property of South African Land Exploration, now controlled by the Anglo-American Corporation, into the Witpoort section of Brakpan and the Apex section of New Kleinfontein. Here the formation is disturbed by the mysterious "Boksburg gap," so that the properties are much more speculative than Vlakfontein 8. Equally speculative are the properties lying to the south-west of Sub Nigel. Spaarwater, for example, which is controlled by East Rand Consolidated, is really an unadulterated gamble. Those who speculate in these mining ventures must realise that it takes a long time to get into production and that an enormous capital expenditure is required. Sinking a six-compartment shaft 4,000ft. will cost over £1,000,000. East Geduld, for example, which began operations in 1927 and came into production in July, 1931, spent £1,600,000 on development. Grootvlei, adjoining East Geduld, which began sinking a shaft in 1933, will probably not reach production till 1938. Developments in Vogelstruisbult, north of Sub Nigel, began this year and will not be completed until 1939. The following table gives the present market valuation of these developing mines:

	Lowest Price, 1933.	Present Price.	Total Market Valuation.	Market Valuation per Claim.
Grootvlei	29/–	£6½	£6,038,000	£1,588
Vogelstruisbult ..	20/7½	49/3	£4,998,875	£1,133
S. Africa Land ..	7/6	54/6	£2,232,000	£1,111

The average investor will probably not stomach shares of this speculative type, whose real value will not be determined for some years, but there is no reason why he should not interest himself in the shares of the finance holding companies which own or control the developing properties. Here are some suggestions:

	Present Price.	Est. 1934 Dividend %.†	Est. Yield %.*
Union Corporation, 12/6	6 11/16	56	£5 4 9
Consol. Goldfields of S. Africa, £1	3 13/16	25	£6 11 0
Central Mining, £8	19 13/16	15	£6 1 0

† Market estimates. * Not allowing for Dominion income-tax relief.

* * *

Dealings are expected to open this week in the ordinary shares of Griffiths Hughes Proprietaries, whose children, Mr. Can and Mr. Can't, are so well known to the British public. The prospectus advertising last week the sale of Griffiths Hughes Proprietaries 5½ per cent. preference shares of £1 at 20*s.* 6*d.* (now quoted at 1*s.* 6*d.* premium) was, in itself, a fine advertisement for Kruschen Salts. Only "Mr. Cans" could have been associated with the financing of the purchase of the share capital of the private company—E. Griffiths Hughes, Ltd. The issued share capital of this private company was £172,350, and it was bought for £1,000,000 in cash and £1,499,993 in ordinary shares of £1 fully paid. After paying the vendors, the new company was left with £25,000 working capital, which was considered adequate. The excess of tangible assets over liabilities was £410,140, so that £2,089,793 of the purchase consideration represented "goodwill." The combined net profits of the company and its subsidiaries for the last five years were £382,460 per annum. For the year ending March 31st, 1934, in which the profits of the subsidiaries dropped from £32,080 to £4,024, the actual combined profits amounted to £451,370. After paying the preference share dividends, the new company, on past results, should make about 20 per cent. on its ordinary shares. The underwriters of the issue agreed to purchase from the vendors 500,000 ordinary shares of £1 at par and in consideration thereof to procure the subscription of the 1,000,000 preference shares and to pay the preliminary expenses of the company (£69,250, exclusive of underwriters' commissions) and the legal and other expenses of the vendors.

Later.—Dealings have begun in these ordinary shares at around 40/-. Another example of what was described last week as a "financial killing"!

COMPANY MEETING.

NATIONAL BANK OF NEW ZEALAND

IMPROVING TRADE OUTLOOK

The sixty-second ordinary general meeting of the National Bank of New Zealand, Ltd., was held on Tuesday in London.

SIR AUSTIN E. HARRIS, K.B.E. (the chairman) said (in part):

Despite some improvement in prices and a better tone in the financial and Budgetary position in New Zealand the year had again been very difficult from the banking point of view. The difficulty of earning profits in a time of greatly diminished trade had been till now somewhat mitigated by the fact that they had been able to lend large sums to the Government on Treasury bills, but that channel for the employment of their funds would be closed to them when the Reserve Bank opened on August 1st. In spite of adverse conditions, however, the result of the year's working was satisfactory.

RECORD DEPOSIT AND CURRENT ACCOUNTS

A new feature of the balance sheet was the transfer of £1,000,000 from their reserve fund to a currency reserve. In doing that they had fallen into line with the other Australasian banks, and had thus provided for the depreciation in New Zealand and Australian assets caused by the high rate of exchange. Another change in the balance sheet was in respect of the exchange and contingency account. Last year they had dealt with the £40,000 required in their final allocation, but this year they had deducted it from their net profits, because they felt that the amount should be a charge against profits. Note circulation at March 31st was slightly higher than last year at £1,111,000, their average for the year being £990,000 against a legal limit of £6,228,000. The average circulation for all banks in New Zealand had been £6,278,000 against a legal limit of £15,447,000.

Deposit and current accounts at £15,500,000 showed an increase over last year of nearly £2,000,000, and once again constituted a record. Advances at £8,925,000 were nearly £900,000 down, and those two figures taken together indicated the great difficulty of employing their money profitably in the ordinary way of business. Coin and bullion and cash at bankers and money at call at £1,426,000 showed a decrease of nearly £1,200,000. Investments in New Zealand Government Treasury Bills now amounted to £6,500,000, or £4,000,000 more than the corresponding figures last year, and other investments at £2,506,000 showed a small increase of £170,000.

The gross profit, after making full provision for bad and doubtful debts was £528,000, as compared with £544,000 a year ago, but against that their expenses showed a decrease of £35,000, so that their net profit was £135,000 as compared with £116,000 last year. They proposed to pay a final dividend at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum for the half-year.

THE EXCHANGE POSITION

As to the exchange position, the favourable trade balance and the accumulation of London funds would not in themselves seem to justify the present depreciation rate of 125, but on the other hand a reduction in the New Zealand rate appeared unlikely so long as Australia maintained her present rate. One of the principal events in the New Zealand banking world during the year under review had been the final formation of the Reserve Bank. With regard to the Reserve Bank, he would only say that the trading banks of the Dominion had proved a bulwark to the country through good times and bad, and there could be no doubt that the development of the Dominion had been attributable in a great measure to the services rendered by them. It was not, therefore, in any way due to the failure of the trading banks that the Reserve Bank was being established, but rather that the development of the international banking situation had indicated a need for establishing central banks for the purpose of effecting international co-operation.

Taking the sterling equivalent and excluding specie, the trade figures for the year ended March 31st last were, exports, £36,834,000 and imports £20,908,000, giving an excess of exports of £15,926,000 compared with last year's figure of £10,628,000. Imports had decreased by £1,141,000, and exports had increased by £4,157,000. Of the total exports dairy produce had accounted for 36.7 per cent., wool for 25.2 per cent., and frozen meat for 22 per cent.

It must be recognised that, in spite of the chaos created by world conditions, New Zealand had striven manfully to meet her difficulties, though it could not be expected that there would be any return to complete normality until some of the world problems of the price levels and trade restrictions were solved. The immediate prospects of banking were none too favourable. They were going through a lean time in New Zealand, and bankers there were facing the same troubles that they had experienced in London—the great difficulty of the employment of their superabundant funds—but so far as they were directly concerned without the opportunities for profitable investment in short-term securities. He was confident that New Zealand conditions would quickly respond to any favourable turn in world affairs, and that with their large liquid resources they would be in a position to take full advantage when the time came.

SIR JAMES GROSE (general manager), then addressed the meeting. The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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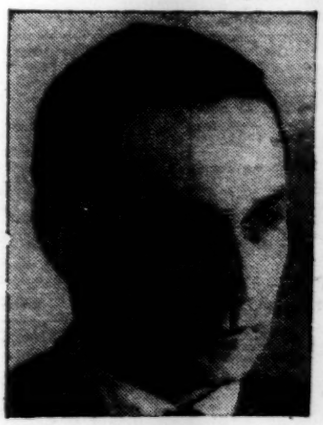

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